NEWS / A3

Presidential son Dato to run for Congress in 1st District of Camarines Sur

LIFESTYLE / C1

Balenciaga's fashion sensation makes surprise but quiet Manila visit

SPORTS / A23

WBC orders champion Barrera to fight the winner of Pacquiao-Morales bout on Nov. 18

NEWS / A2

Despite threats, Atong Ang will be home by Nov. 11

FVR tells GMA: Cha-cha is over, time to move on

By Nikko Dizon, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Philip C. Tubeza

FORMER PRESIDENT FIDEL V. RAMOS SAID yesterday the Charter change issue was "finished" and challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo to now focus on economic reforms to bring the country forward.

Without directly saying that he had given up

FVR TELLS GMA

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, November 3, 2006 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 328 P18 www.inq7.net

Colleagues defend BI man who snapped at Luli

By Nikko Dizon

COLLEAGUES AND SUPERVISORS OF THE IMMigration officer who had a run-in with the First Daughter at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport described him yesterday as a jolly, hard-working man who had never been involved in any irregularity or mischief.

But neither did nor his public apology to

COLLEAGUES A10

RP credit gets upgrade

THE WASTELAND: Where the country's biggest oil spill in August hit hardest in Bito Luzaran, Muara Valencia, Guimaras, the mangroves appear to be breathing their last. To try to save them, the site is sprayed twice a week with oil dispersants. The stretch of black in the background indicates the depth of the oil spill. The little boy has the big duty of monitoring if the spraying is done as scheduled.

Moody's raises rating to 'stable'

By Doris C. Dumlao

MOODY'S INVESTOR Service, the global debt watchdog most pessimistic about the Philippines among credit-rating agencies, yesterday raised its sovereign credit outlook on the country to "stable" from "negative."

A sovereign credit rating is an opinion on the ability and willingness of a government to meet its debt obligations in full and on time.

The improved assessment, cited by Moody's to the government's progress in reining in the fiscal deficit this year and in easing dependence on external financing, is expected to result in lower foreign borrowing costs for the government and private companies.

It is also expected to further boost the financial market's confidence in Philippine stocks.

Expectations of an improvement in the credit rating were partly responsible for the strengthening of the peso by more

AP CREDIT A17

GMA: RP, Japan deal to Senate for approval

By Christine O. Avendaño

HONG KONG—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said she would endorse to the Senate for ratification an economic agreement which critics claimed would allow the entry into the Philippines of toxic and hazardous waste from Japan.

Ms Arroyo, who returns to Manila today following a weeklong visit to China and Hong Kong, told reporters she would sign the endorsement of the Japan-Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) to the Senate as soon she gets it from Trade Secretary Peter Favila.

"Definitely it will be sent," she said.

In Manila yesterday, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said she would bring a case to the Supreme Court if Malacañang decides that JPEPA is an executive agreement that does not need ratification by the Senate.

GMA A17

Meralco to refund consumers P827M

MANILA ELECTRIC CO. (Meralco) will likely start refunding customers P827 million in January for generation charges imposed in 2004, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) said yesterday.

The Supreme Court ordered the country's biggest power retailer to Aregon to refund customers, saying an ERC-approved increase in June to August of 2004 was void because it was applied without a public hearing or public notice.

Meralco said it would ask permission from the energy regulator to raise generation charges to recover the cost of the refund, arguing that the court's decision was based on a technicality.

"We are filing a new petition to recover the costs after we have refunded because we have already advanced them to the generators," Meralco spokesperson Ilja Cuna said, adding that the refund would be "revenue neutral."

Last week, the regulator approved Meralco's refund proposal, which will be in the form of credits on three months' worth of electricity bills rather than a cash rebate.

"By January, they will start already because then they will have identified the consumers from whom they had collected and will refund," ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano said.

"This scheme seems to be logical and is more favorable to the consumers because it will not lead to confusion," Albano added.

MERALCO A17

KLM baby home to stirring, historic welcome

By Nikko Dizon

WHEN HE GROWS UP, KARL Lorenz Martin Bansil will have an interesting story to tell about his name, his birth and how his mother decided that no matter what, he will be a Filipino citizen.

"I was told in Denmark, and in the hospital in Almaty, Kazakhstan, where we stayed, that my baby can either be Dutch or Russian. But I want him to be a Filipino," Berchel Bansil, 22, told reporters upon arriving in Manila yesterday.

Bansil also wanted to name her son after his grandfathers and KLM Airlines, on whose plane he was prematurely born.

KLM BABY A17

DUTCH TREAT: 1st to be born on KLM's 55-year-old route to Manila makes this baby part of the airline's history. Its staff has over him and mother Berchel welcoming them with balloons and a new baby carrier.

'We'll fight hunger until there is food on every table'

By Philip C. Tubeza and Jerome Aning

ADMINISTRATION ALLIES IN Congress yesterday described as "misleading" the Social Weather Stations survey showing a record incidence of hunger in the country.

Malacañang assured the public that President Macapagal-Arroyo continued to keep the challenge of addressing the problem of hunger "at the top of her priorities."

"This government will never relent in this fight until there is food on every table," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement he issued in Hong Kong where he's traveling with the President.

WE'LL FIGHT A17

Battle of the bulge: After 'Wonderbra,' 'Wonderjock'

SYDNEY—SIZE REALLY DOES count, just ask Australian underwear maker AussieBum, which has just launched the "Wonderjock" for men who want to look bigger.

Since the launch seven days ago, AussieBum says it has sold 50,000 pairs of "Wonderjock," mostly on its website www.aussiebum.com and a handful of stores around the world.

BATTLE A18

US ELECTIONS

Democrats on verge of controlling Congress

WASHINGTON—DEMOCRATS are within striking range of seizing control of Capitol Hill and, if they win next Tuesday, they are expected by a majority of Americans to reduce or end US military involvement in Iraq, according to two polls released on Wednesday.

Both the Reuters/Zogby and The New York Times/CBS News polls showed that Americans considered the Iraq war as the most important issue affecting their vote in the upcoming congressional elections.

Democrats are ahead in races for 12 of 15 key Republican-held seats in the House of Representatives one week before the Nov. 7 elections, placing them in a good position of gaining control of the chamber, according to the Reuters/Zogby poll.

In these crucial races, five Democrats enjoyed comfortable double-digit leads, with just one Republican holding a double-digit advantage.

Seven of nine Republican incumbents trailed Democratic challengers in the polls, and Republicans were behind in five of six open Republican-held districts.

Democrats must pick up 15 seats to reclaim control of the House, and the polls found Republicans struggling to avoid being swept from power for the first time since 1994.

Since the last round of the Reuters/Zogby polls in early October when Democrats led in 11 of the 15 races, Democrats improved their standing to nine districts and Republicans gained ground in six.

Three districts switched leaders, with two Democrats and one Republican moving into the lead after trailing in October.

"Democrats are getting very close to that magic number of 15," pollster John Zogby said.

DEMOCRATS A18

Despite threats, Ang home by Nov. 11

By Lala B. Salaverria and Margaux C. Ortiz

HE FEARS FOR HIS LIFE BUT CHARLIE "ATONG" Ang, the gambling buddy of deposed President Joseph Estrada, is ready to return home.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said Ang, who is being extradited from the United States to stand trial for plunder, has requested that he be detained in a secure place because of threats that he still has Lilled before he can testify.

According to Gonzalez, Ang mentioned "a certain person by the name of Lubis who relayed the threat to him."

"He, Ang Kim, appealed for reinforcement in a place where he can feel safe because he has received threats that they'll kill him when he comes home," Gonzalez told reporters.

Reynaldo Esmeralda, the Bicutan Warden of Immigration officials scheduled to leave for the US last night to escort Ang back to the country, said Ang had been warned that he would not be able to board the plane that would take him back to the Philippines.

"Ang expressed his fear over recent text messages that threatened his life," said Esmeralda, the NBI deputy director for regional operations management, who spoke with Ang by telephone early yesterday.

Later via the deathchamber, Ang told no qualms about returning home, he said.

Ang said he was haunted when he was placed in solitary confinement for seven months after being arrested in the US five years ago, Esmeralda said.

Asked if the threats to Ang came from the opposition or if the Palace that Ang mentioned was Chief Supt. Francisco Zubia, a close associate of opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Gonzalez said he did not know.

Zubia was one of the senior police officers implicated in the Rizalina Sukiming testimony conversation. After Estrada's ouster in 2001, Zubia was assigned to the Philippine National Police headquarters' support services, a job akin to being placed in the "freezer." In 2004, he was assigned to security coordination for the presidential campaign of Lacson because of reported assassination threats against the candidate.

Gonzalez said it would be up to the Sandiganbayan to decide whether Ang would be detained.

The justice secretary said the government had no interest in Ang as a witness in the plunder case against Estrada as the trial against the Lalled ex-president had ended.

But he said that our purpose in the plunder case against Ang, if it comes to that, could influence the case against Estrada in the same way as those that were used against Estrada would be used in aid of Ang.

"I think that any testimony of Mr. Ang will have some influence if it overrules the judgment on Erap," said Gonzalez.

Fenni Sison, Bureau Jail Gen. Luis "Chavit" Singson, the prosecution's star witness against Estrada, said it was never the prosecution's intention to use Ang as a witness against Estrada because the case against the deposed leader was "already very strong."

"Our main concern now is the judgment of the case and to finally give justice to all concerned," he said.

But he said that if Ang were to take the witness stand, among those to be dragged deeper into the case was Sen. Jinggoy Estrada. On the president's son, who is co-accused in the plunder case against his father, "The prosecution did not elaborate.

Singson said he welcomed "with open arms" the return of Ang.

"I'm not a vindictive person, so I have no problem with Atong," he said.

However, Ang and Estrada were gambling buddies until the three had a falling-out in 2000, apparently over the division of spoils of the illegal numbers game "jueteng." Singson were public with his revelations of Estrada's alleged involvement in jueteng bribes, which directly led to the ouster of the former President in a people power uprising.

Singson said he had been in "constant communication" with Ang, particularly on the subject of the latter's return to the country.

Barong Tapis established by Oil of Scent that Ang had to leave the US before Nov. 11, Gonzalez dispatched Esmeralda and NBI Assistant chief Clavo de Castro to the US to bring Ang back as soon as possible.

Ang fled the country on Jan. 20, 2001, following the collapse of the Estrada administration. He was arrested at a casino in Las Vegas and detained in Nevada on the basis of a Philippine government request for his extradition following the filing of plunder charges against him.

He was later freed on bail and placed under house arrest.

Last September, a Nevada court ordered Ang's extradition to the Philippines to stand trial for plunder.

In a note set-side dated Oct. 6, the US state department informed the Philippine government that Ang had been found extraditable and was immediately available for transfer.

It said the "transfer should take place as soon as possible, but no later than Nov. 11, 2006, otherwise Ang may be entitled to petition for his discharge from US custody." With a report from Jeannette Bolido Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

Miriam vying for Chief Justice

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Lala B. Salaverria

EVERY DAY IS ALL SAINTS' DAY FOR THEM

A relative sits "eloquently" [illegible] of photos flowers and candles on the grounds of the Redemptorist Church in Baclaran as visitors pray for departed loved ones. Many visitors, especially children, are ill. Saints' Day. Relatives of those interred in tombs have been keeping daily vigil as they say for some months now in efforts to eradicate dengue in the buildings of cemeteries. The day of the departed was just another day of waiting and hoping for them. AFP/JOVE

ANNOUNCEMENT

UNU International Symposium on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

POPs in Asia: Its Status and Future

November 7, 2006, 8:00 am to 5:30 pm, NSTMED Auditorium
National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education (NSTMED)
University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

UNU Lectures

POPs Analysis and Risk Assessment

November 8, 2006, 9:00am to 10:30am, NSRI Conference Room
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Erap senatorial slate doesn't faze Palace

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Juliet Labog-Javellana

MALACAÑANG IS PUTTING UP A BRAVE front in the face of deposed President Joseph Estrada's "poaching" of administration allies for its drawn opposition senatorial ticket in 2007.

"We're in this administration's corridor, we have a deep breath. But right now, we will not yet accept the position of the administration because we have not lost hope on Charter change," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, when told, well being briefed about as a possible senatorial candidate.

Ermita said he had no idea what the circumstances were behind Estrada's initiative of administration allies to his fold, or whether those entertained were serious about it.

Among the Secret allies on Estrada's list are Senators Manuel Villar, Ralph Recto and Francis Pangilinan.

"There is a ranking Lakas member loyal to the party, but because his name was mentioned by Estrada does not mean he's out of the party. I'm sure he will just laugh. Or Pangilinan for that matter," Estrada said.

He denied speculation that two Cabinet secretaries planning for a Senate seat were seeking Estrada's endorsement.

"There is no need for loyalty checks, times are just repeats. After all, everyone will suffer the consequences or benefit from their politics," Ermita said.

Estrada earlier announced a tentative list of candidates for the Senate which included incumbents Ilocos Villar, Recto, Pangilinan, former Senators Loner Legarda, Tessie Aquino-Oreta, retired Marine Gen. Victor Ibrio III and Gregorio Honasan, House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and Taguig Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano, lawyer Angelina Diosdado III and JV Ejercito.

He said the senator in the list were not his personal choices but were chosen after consultations with various opposition partners nationwide.

Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio said Malacañang would respect administration senators to decide whether they are "with us or against us" for them to be considered in the administration's senatorial slate.

"At some point they will have to state an opinion early if they want to be in our lineup or in the opposition lineup. Everyone's free to be allowed," Claudio said in a phone interview. With Norman Bordadora

RP inks pact on coral reefs

ALAMOS CITY—SEVEN OFFICIALS FROM six countries, including two from the Philippines, signed a declaration in Coronel, Mexico, calling for a concerted plan to save coral reefs and tropical marine ecosystems.

Alamos Mayor Bernardo Bringas and Puerto Peñasco City Vice Mayor Lucila Ruiz Martinez signed the declaration during the Third International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium on Oct. 26-28 attended by 300 delegates from 45 countries.

The other signatories were Mobbood Jamiran, mayor of Zamboanga municipal council of Tawi-tawi; Tom Tate, mayor of Townsville, Queensland, Australia; Tomiki Matsuga, mayor of Taketomi, Ryukyuga, Gosh Edmalo, Governor Olympia Aragon, mayor of Coronel, Mexico, and Joseph Aveiro, director, mayor of Honolulu, Hawaii.

Bringas said he was chosen as a delegate to the Coronel conference because of the efforts of the dissident government to protect and conserve the coastal reefs of the city.

He said the declaration would be submitted to the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) for its consideration.

"We have 800 hectares of coral reefs in the Marsibol Marsh Ramsar Park, replete with 400 species of marine life," Bringas said.

To protect the coral reefs, the city government strictly enforces fishery laws such as banning illegal fishing and commercial poaching in the municipal waters.

According to the Coronel declaration, "Healthy coral reefs are a beautiful indicator of healthy coastal and marine ecosystems and are increasingly valuable natural resources."

"The economic, social and cultural future of people of tropical coasts and islands are linked to the health of coral reefs and other tropical marine ecosystems. They are at the front line of the issues that directly affect the future of coral reefs and associated ecosystems," the declaration said, and noting that they face "many challenges to their survival from human efforts."

Eduardo Garcia-Fuentes, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Another Arroyo – 'Dato' – running for Congress

By Fe Zamora

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO's youngest son, Dinadado Ignacio "Dato" Arroyo, will be running for Congress next year, proof of the continuing presence and clout of the controversial political clan in Philippine politics.

The 31-year-old Arroyo, who grew up in Quezon City, will run in the 1st District of Camarines Sur, in place of then-incumbent Rolando Andaya, who has been named secretary of budget and management.

"There is no problem, (he is an adopted son of the province and he has friends there)," Andaya said in a telephone interview.

Andaya said Arroyo will run "unopposed."

President Arroyo's father, Diosdado Macapagal, was President of the Republic from 1961 to 1965. Her elder son, Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, had served as vice governor of Pampanga before winning a seat in the House of Representatives. He has reportedly set his sights on the Senate for the May 2007 elections.

Her brother-in-law, Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, who elected congressman of the 5th district of Negros Occidental in 2004.

The President's allies are reportedly trying to convince her elder brother Gen. Mariano, the only sister of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, to run either for governor or representative of the 4th district of Iloilo.

For young Dato, signs of a budding political career supposedly started showing when he began taking an active role in public affairs in Bicol. Early this year, he was named chair of the Bicol Regional Tourism Council.

He has also been making his presence felt by launching his mother's propoor projects in Camarines Sur—with his activities dubbed by critics as the Malacañang-managed Philippine Information Agency.

In July, Dato was reported handing Dar Thulaban Hotte outlets in Naga City and the towns of Libmanan, Pasacao, Pamplona and Cabusao, all in Camarines Sur.

In August, Dato also led the launching of the Bottle ng Barangay projects in the province.

Dato's mother became Chief Executive in 2001. Dato was an ardent student at upscale Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City, and later at the Ateneo de Naga in Camarines Sur where he reportedly took up legal management.

In 2003, he married his long-time girlfriend Maria Victoria Maxcend.

But the political bug could also have come from his father's ancestors.

The First Gentleman's grandfather, Jose Ma. Tribal Arroyo, was a legislator during the American colonial years. An other grandparent, Mariano Arroyo, was governor of Iloilo.

The Inquirer.net has about the First Gentleman's progeny became public when Sen. Benigno Aquino accused the President's husband of making millions of campaign funds in the bank account of "Jose Pilola."

Cherie Gil: Is Her Face "Retouched?"

With her face gracing countless magazines, billboards and posters, one may question if Cherie Gil's face has ever been "enhanced" by the magic of computer retouching. Yes, Cherie admits to having her face retouched! But not in the way you think. She recently tried Facial Care Centre's newest treatment, Fraxel, which is similar to computer-generated retouching.

"I was in New York last August when I found out about Fraxel, which was actually a big thing in the States," she recalls. "Especially for women who don't like surgery. I was really excited when I learned that it's already offered at Facial Care by the time I came back to Manila." Unlike surgical lasers that remove the top layer of skin, Fraxel is "fractional." It intensively treats a very small fraction of the skin without affecting any surrounding tissue. The treatment is well-tolerated and feels like slight pin-prick sensations. "The pain was insignificant because an anesthetic cream was applied on my skin prior to my treatment," Cherie imparts. "It wasn't uncomfortable at all. The procedure only took about 30 minutes."

Fraxel works by using a handpiece that is gently guided across the skin like an airbrush. This produces thousands of deep, tiny columns in your skin called "microthermal treatment zones." The process is similar to altering or retouching a photograph pixel by pixel, smoothing out irregularities and blemishes while restoring color and quality.

"I saw a remarkable effect after only the first treatment!" Cherie narrates. "And I'm not saying this just because I'm endorsing Facial Care. As soon as I stepped out of the room after the treatment, I felt my skin and said to myself, 'Boy, it's so smooth as a baby's butt!' And there really was a remarkable difference on my forehead. I used to have deeper lines in this area. In the neck area I felt a tightening also."

After the treatment, I felt my skin and said to myself, "Boy, it's as smooth as a baby's butt!"

Side effects are generally mild. Cherie describes: "An hour later, I felt that mild sunburn sensation and a certain tightness. My skin began to redden, but it just looked like a tan. The day after, the redness lessened. Plus there was a bit of flaking. In fact I had a pimple prior to that treatment and it just dried and like a scab. After about 4 days there wasn't as much redness anymore. The scaling also lessened." Any swelling after a treatment usually subsides after a day or two while the pinkish tone fades over several days. This is a normal sign that the skin is deeply healing. But there's new collagen growth and good blood circulation.

Cherie compares Fraxel to that of another procedure, Thermage. "I've tried Thermage, but I had to be sedated. Though it wasn't really invasive, it was a bit more aggressive than Fraxel. I didn't like being sedated. About 2 days after the treatment, I felt a 'bruised' sensation, as if my face was punched. My skin was swollen for about 2 weeks." She describes Fraxel as a treatment with the results of some effective invasive procedures, but without the need for a surgical process.

On average, an effective Fraxel treatment regimen is up to 5 sessions spaced about 3 to 4 weeks apart. "I know I need about 4 to 5 sessions for maximum results," Cherie says. "That's why I can't wait for the next session to see what will happen to my other lines! I definitely recommend Fraxel to women my age who have some fine lines and pigmentation. I also hear that Fraxel works well on deep scarring and severe acne and surgical scars. So it isn't only an aesthetic necessity but also a medical necessity."

Fraxel dramatically improves skin texture and pore size, erases brown spots, uneven pigmentation problems and smoothes away wrinkles around the eyes. It also rejuvenates the neck, chest and hands, delicate areas often ignored, yet are the most revealing tell-tale signs of aging. It also removes deep, severe scars that cannot be removed by other conventional peels and procedures.

You can look years younger! All you need is a "touch up" with Fraxel! Call Facial Care Center now at 892-8820 (7946) for the latest laser treatment.

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BSP offers reward, tips on spotting fake currency

By Alcuin Papa

GET REAL MONEY FOR FREE.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said yesterday it was offering a reward to anyone who could provide information on syndicates producing and distributing counterfeit coins and bills.

Alarmed by the proliferation of fake P10 and P5 coins, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura de la Cruz said rewards could receive as much as P500,000 for information on the syndicates through the "Bayani Ka Ns, Maghahatpon Ka Rs" program.

"The public should be aware of the existence of counterfeit bills and coins to make sure that the Christmas season is just around the corner where there is a lot of money changing hands," said De la Cruz in a press conference in Camp Crame.

He also said the public should closely examine the bills and coins in their possession and promptly surrender the fakes to the BSP or its regional offices.

Clean note policy

Unfortunately, Usec Malc, BSP currency analysts department manager, said the bank cannot exchange the fake bills and coins for the real thing.

"It's a voluntary surrender of the counterfeits to make sure they are no longer in circulation and for us to know that there are fakes in the hands of the public," she said.

The possession of fake bills and coins are not necessarily punishable by law but distributing and producing them willfully falls under the Revised Penal Code, Malc said.

She said the BSP had a "clean note policy" where dirty bills could be exchanged for new ones.

"Counterfeiters are also using dirty notes so that the holder would not assume these are fake," she said.

She also said defacing and writing on bills violates BSP circulars and other laws.

Real vs fake

Malc said the public should familiarize itself with the genuine security features of the P1,000 bill.

She the coins, she said both the P10 and P5 coins were not magnetic. In the case of the P5.00 coin, the genuine or, its side were are visible if examined from the face side.

"The metal features of the real coins are smooth and shiny. Fakes are rough to the touch and look gloomy. The images are also off center," Malc said.

She said the 10-centavo, 5-centavo and 1-centavo coins were magnetic, but the said coins 25 and 25-centavo coins were magnetic while others were not. "But P1 and 25-centavo coins are real and have security fiber, she said.

Real bills, she said, had security features and a rough texture. Some security features like the watermark and security thread were embossed and could be felt by running the fingers over the designs.

While Malc admitted counterfeiters had tried to copy the watermark and the security thread, "the watermarks up of real bills is different and is much better."

According to the booklet "Know Your Philippine Currency" distributed by the BSP, the public should watch out for red and blue security fibers scattered randomly on both surfaces of genuine notes. Portraits or genuine notes are also "life-like" with shadings formed by fine lines that give it a distinct facial expression which is difficult to replicate.

The booklet also says to watch out for the fluorescent print in the genuine bank notes. The print is the invisible ascentrial ruler located off-center on the face of the note that glows when exposed to ultraviolet light.

Syndicate operation

Genuine bills also have minute printing or the microtext and finely printed words "Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas" or "Central Bank of the Philippines" located on the face and back of the notes. These are small but clearly printed and readable.

De la Cruz said the booklets would be given for free and upon request by the public.

Last month, operatives of the National Bureau of Investigation arrested two Chinese in Valenzuela City allegedly involved in producing fake coins. A few weeks later, six people, including one Chinese, were arrested in Quezon City for distributing the fake coins.

Operatives of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group have said the heyday that a syndicate operating in northern Manila was responsible for the proliferation of the fake coins.

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ET Outer Tech

PNP to enforce gun ban during election period

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE WILL IMplement another gun ban beginning January until four more year in another attempt to prevent an outbreak of violence in the 2007 midterm election, spokesofficial said yesterday.

Chief Supt. Arturo Cacdac, chief of the PNP's Firearms and Explosives Division (FED) said that based on Commission on Elections (Comelec) Resolution 7787, the gun ban would take effect on Jan. 14 and run up to June 13.

Cacdac said the resolution prohibits the "carrying or transporting of firearms or other deadly weapons in public places, including any building, street, park, private vehicles or public conveyance."

"Nobody will be exempted from the gun ban, even government and police officials, unless provided by the Comelec," Cacdac said.

He said that even if a gun owner had a license for his firearm and a permit to carry it outside his home, an authorization from the Comelec would be needed if the owners wants to carry his firearm outside his residence during the period of the ban.

Cacdac said gun owners who violate the ban will be slapped with illegal possession of firearms charges.

The election for local officials, members of the House of Representatives and the Senate is scheduled for May 2007.

The last national elections in 2004 was said to be the bloodiest in over two decades with at least 137 people killed in election-related violence incidents all over the country.

The death toll even surpassed the number of people killed during the elections held in 1986 during the penultimate last weeks of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship. Inquirer records showed 93 people were killed during the 1986 campaign.

In the 2001 elections, 111 died in political violence while 87 were killed during the 1998 presidential polls, 63 in the 1995 elections and 56 in 1992.

Alcuin Papa

Corrections

IN THE NOV. 1 ISSUE, a boxy page article—"Construction: Different map of going"—misstated the price range for space at the Market of St. Thérèse Cubaodiary. Prices start at P400,000—not P14,000.

* * *

IN THE NOV. 2 ISSUE, a photo caption across the Nation on Page A14 inaccurately changed the dates of birth and death of Jose Maria Jarauje Rey Oidal. He was born on Nov. 28, 1879 and died on March 6, 1927—not the other way around.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Inquirer Readers' Advocate, Inquirer 500 Building, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 500 Building, Ayala Ave., Makati, Metro Manila, Makati City, fax 896-2007-63-90; e-mail address: inquirer@inquirer.com.ph.

Readers may also call the Inquirer at 896-6000 and ask to be connected to the Readers' Advocate. Only requests for correction of factual errors will be entertained. Requests for correction of opinions will not be entertained.

'Nicole' returns to Subic, cries out for justice

By Amberr Joaquin
Regional Central Luzon

OLONGAPO CITY—WHILE THE NATION remembered the dead on Wednesday, 24-year-old "Nicole" was back on the scene of her alleged rape by United States Marines exactly one year ago, demanding justice and campaigning for an end to visits here by US warships "to prevent the rape of more Filipinas by American soldiers."

On Nov. 27, a Makati court is expected to hand down its verdict on the rape charges brought against lone US Marine by Nicole.

Protesting activists, with some male supporters, staged a lightning protest rally at the Subic Bay Freeport on Wednesday, carrying placards calling for justice for Nicole and for the abrogation of the Visiting Forces Agreement that allows US servicemen to participate in joint games with Philippine forces.

Organized by Task Force Subic Rape, the rally included Nicole and her lawyer Evalyn Ursua. Shouting "US hanol ni supin, gulky dudung, pervadores (jail them, punish them)," the protesters marched toward the site where Nicole's attackers allegedly clamped her after raping her.

But even while they were still 20 meters away from the site, the marchers were blocked by law enforcers from the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, citing security concerns.

The protest caught the SBMA by surprise, coming as it did on the "Gini Rason," the same crucial date last year that had brought the four accused Marines to Subic at the time of the alleged rape, and nine other US ships were docked for the Balikatan exercises that ended on Oct. 31.

At the time of the rally, about 5,000 servicemen were allowed out of the freeport for recreation.

"Why can't our government do anything to stop the Americans from coming here?" said Nicole, expressing dismay at the presence of the US ships in Subic "as if nothing happened, as if it is business as usual."

Ursua pleaded with the SBMA security men to allow over just herself and Nicole to proceed to the seaport area, "if only to allow Nicole to point to the media where she was dumped by her four assailants a year ago." Her request was turned down.

The group then marched to SBMA Building 229, merged with another group of protesters, and held a short candle-lighting program.

"I came here as a courist, not as a hooker," Nicole said, countering insinuations that she was a prostitute.

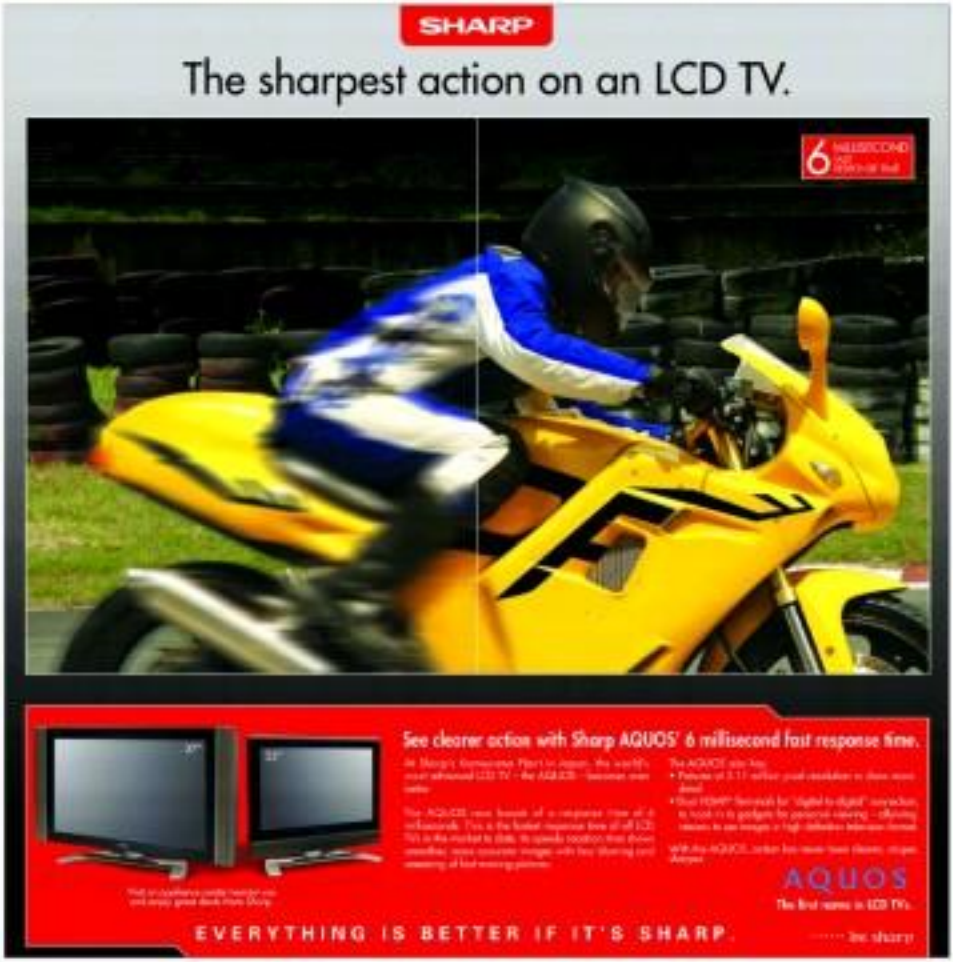
She said she was ready for whatever verdict the Makati court would hand down.

"No confidence that I did my best, I was courageous, I fought really hard, I believe I have a strong case, and that's I could not let it fought," she said in Filipino.

"What I'm after is justice. I am proud that I stood up to fight for what is right and for my rights as a woman," she said.

SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza explained that rallies inside the freeport were banned but he allowed the protest march last Wednesday because "we want to use the opportunity to allow them to express their sentiments, for as long as they are peaceful."

But he warned down the request for access to the site where Nicole was allegedly dumped by her attackers "because there is a security caution, not because of the rally but for general security purposes."



FVR tells GMA: Cha-cha is over, time to move on

Campaign #1

on Cha-cha, Ramos, a staunch advocate of constitutional reform, said that following the defeat of Cha-cha in the Supreme Court, "it's time to move on to a new term."

"A good general knows not waste his resources in an old battlefield but make new strategy to find his one advances," Ramos, a former retired four-star chief of staff, said.

Headed for showdown

President Macapagal-Arroyo, meanwhile, is getting solid front from Vice Pres. Noli de Castro and supported backed tonight in in the "showdown" between her allies and Cayetano officials will vote the mode of amending the Constitution after its failure in the Supreme Court.

"We are definitely heading for a showdown on Charter change, and the President will are on this immediately upon her arrival," Michael Defensor, Mr. Arroyo's chief of staff, told the Inquirer.

Defensor said it was crucial for the Cabinet to have "a united stand" on Charter change because, he said, the opposition was taking advantage of the dismissal of the people's initiative petition by the Supreme Court to advance its interests, supposedly concerning the 2007 elections.

"It's a distraction. We cannot afford to be focused on these small details when we should be most focused on the upcoming elections," he said, adding none of us can choose the opposition dominating the save.

Defensor admitted that the Cabinet was sharply divided on which road to take after the defeat of the people's initiative.

The remaining modes for amending the Charter proposed is to Malacañang's desired shift to a constituent parliamentary system or a constituent assembly (Con-Ass) and a road Defensor opposition (Con-Con).

The former is being pushed by the Lakas faction in the Cabinet, which includes Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Cabinet Cesar Sarino.

Defensor said he and like-minded Cabinet officials were leaning toward a constituent assembly as the best mode to avoid Charter change.

"I told the Lakas officials that they've voted Con-Ass for the last 10 years to no avail, and that if they had wanted partner for Con-Con from the start, we could have amended the Constitution by this time," he said.

Defensor said that if the administration forces agreed to push for a constitutional convention, its delegates could then be elected in the 2007 polls and there would be a better chance of achieving the goal without legal complications.

He said the proponents of a constituent assembly should realize that it would be impossible for them to get the House to approve a Cha-cha for Congress to vote on Charter change in one and not on separate bodies.

"The issue will definitely go to the Supreme Court and the Presidency cannot afford another legal setback. It's too risky for her," Defensor said.

Asked if Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz agreed with his position, Defensor said: "Yes, he has the same views."

Cruz is a founding partner of "The Four," the President's long-time legal counsel, which was said to have been at odds with Speaker Jose de Venecia's "hard sell" strategy in pushing Charter change through a people's initiative.

Another of The Four's founding partners, new Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonio Carpio, wrote the "stinging" decision that threw out the people's initiative.

But in a statement, Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso accused The Four of rendering Charter change "the fear of losing "[the] chief in the appointment of government officials, including cushing members of the executive and the judiciary."

"Worse, a member of the powerful Commission on Appointments, also installed Cruz for not her telling the people's initiative a "foreclosure" reforms, and said the latter should apologize to the local government officials behind the campaign for his "reckless remarks" and "false display of arrogance."

Defensor cautioned the Lakas members in the House against forcing Mr. Arroyo to come up with a final decision on what mode she prefered for Charter change.

"You cannot burden the President to make a stand on this, especially after the Supreme Court decision. The political leaders should decide among themselves what is the best route to take," he said.

He also noted that the division in the Cabinet over Charter change "mirrored" the infighting in the House of Representatives over the issue.

SC not likely to reverse

Ramos, who left for but right on a 10-day official trip to Europe and Japan, said it was unlikely the Supreme Court would reverse itself on its decision junking the people's initiative petition to pave the way for Constitutional amendments and the shift to a parliamentary-unicameral form of government.

The President, he said, "should not be dragged down (by) this unreasonable debate about the Supreme Court decision and the initiative by pursuing to Charter change. She must ascend that higher pedestal and tell the shots."

Ramos also said President Arroyo should reassess the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) membership.

He said this was the "mechanism" by which the President could get the Philippines to go ahead of the other countries in the region.

"My suggestion to the President and her Cabinet is to elevate the deliberations and debates to a higher plane—beyond the Supreme Court, beyond Congress, especially the Senate,—and back to the Office of the President, Malacañang and the Cabinet because that's where most of our problems belong," he said.

"(We need) the implementation of reforms and the privatization of needed legislative measures so that the country can become competitive and therefore grow sustainably," he said.

Tipping point

"The economy is the tipping point," Ramos said.

He said that before he pushed for Charter change during his term, he "steered the debate away" from Constitutional amendments during the Lakas meetings and several trade missions that "needed economic, social, local government laws were legislated."

Ramos said his actions should also look into the controversial Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), the government's policy on competitiveness, local tax reform, as well as the economic provisions in the law on foreign ownership.

Committed to Cha-cha

In Hong Kong, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye declared that the Arroyo administration continued to be committed to Charter change.

"The spirit of political renewal and economic reform will be a permanent part of this administration's agenda," he said in a brief statement. "Charter change continues to be 'our strong platform' amendment through means outlined by the people and the law."

Bunye issued the statement a day after Ms Arroyo's allies in the House called on her to "clear the air" and say whether they should proceed with their plan to convene Congress into a constituent assembly without the Senate's participation. With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and TJ Burgonio

I'm not out to topple JDV—Pichay

AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay dismissed reports that he was out to topple Speaker Jose de Venecia to make Charter change more palatable to the senators.

Pichay, author of one of the two House resolutions calling for the convening of a constituent assembly, said critics were spreading the "black propaganda" to discredit and undermine the exercise and discourage the majority of congressmen from supporting it.

"They are so scared because (the House members) have signed up for my resolution, which makes Con-Ass inevitable," he said.

Pichay told the Inquirer on Monday that he had secured 199 signatures, or one signature more than the required three-fourths vote of all members of Congress to amend the Charter.

Yesterday, he said "no amount of black propaganda will dissuade the overwhelming majority of House members who are solidly behind Con-Ass."

Palace reporters know how Luli felt

By Christine O. Avendaño

SPEAKING OF JUMPING A check-in line, Inez officials of the Philippine government tried to do just that at the airport in Nanning, China, on Tuesday.

At around 10 a.m., reporters including myself were waiting in line to check in for a flight to Hong Kong, when we were scheduled to have an interview with President Macapagal-Arroyo at 1 p.m.

The line was long and included staff members of Malacañang, so our race came, we saw a Chinese official pursuing four passports to cut check-in queue and asking that these be stamped ahead of ours. The passports had red covers, meaning they were government-issued.

It turned out that the passport holders—who, we were later told, were all officials of the Department of Trade and Industry—were not in this queue and were not readily challing.

Some members of our group protested and angrily told the check-in agent to ignore the four officials' request.

Eventually, the Chinese official who was serving in their agent got their passports back. But we even found out that they were able to leave their seat at the next counter.

We later told Trade Secretary Peter Favila about the incident.

He said he would look into it and, if necessary, take action, especially against a male DTI official who unwittingly asked another reporter if my group had finally gotten done. Otherwise, he said, "I'll see to it."

PHILIPPINE DIABETES ASSOCIATION

DIABETES 2006

On November 4 and 5, the Philippine Diabetes Association (PDA) will be holding the Diabetes Expo, a trade show with the objective of bringing diabetes awareness to the general public and familiarizing them with resources and organizations that can make living with diabetes easier. The said event will be held at the Megatrade Hall 1 of SM Megamall, Ortigas, Mandaluyong City. I am happy to invite you to participate in this activity.

Dr. Ma. Teresa P. Que
President, Philippine Diabetes Association

THE SECRETARIAT
Philippine Diabetes Association, Inc.

Learn foreign tongue, local studes urged

THE COUNTRY'S BIGGEST BUSINESS LABOR group yesterday urged the government and the private sector to actively promote foreign language courses in schools, saying this would be a very positive move in an increasingly border-less world.

Trade Union Congress of the Philippines secretary general Ernesto Herrera said that aside from English, Filipinos can best should at least have basic knowledge of other international languages such as Spanish, Arabic, French, Chinese and Japanese to make them more employable.

"More students should be motivated to voluntarily take up foreign language courses as a way of getting up-our business expand for the fierce competition in the global trade in services," Herrera said.

He added, "This is not just about foreign language speaking staff in call centers. This is about enabling more college graduates to achieve higher standards of living once they enter the labor force, here or overseas."

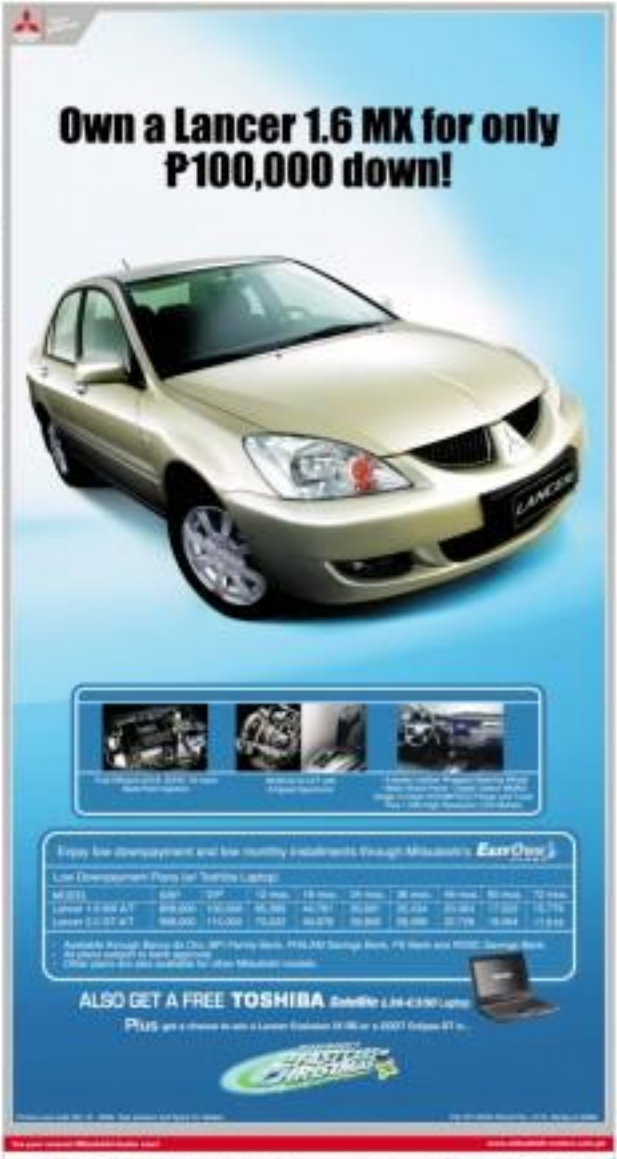
The former senator said Filipinos with foreign language skills were likely to find lucrative jobs in conjunction with global operations, the travel industry, diplomatic service and multilateral institutions.

In an increasingly globalized economic order, young professionals and workers who are able to speak a second foreign language would definitely enjoy higher paying employment opportunities, Herrera said.

He cited the case of the Caucasians for provincial government, which is reaching local nurses to speak Japanese ahead of their deployment to Tokyo.

The boom in business process outsourcing (BPO) has also spurred a growing demand for foreign language speaking staff in Philippine-based call centers.

Among the large BPO providers aggressively recruiting Spanish-speaking Filipino call center personnel are eMercator Global Solutions Inc. and PeopleSupport Inc. — Jerome Aning



GOOD THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN THE WEST ZONE

Maynilad's Dagat-Dagatan Sewage and Septage Treatment Plant receives ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 14001:2000, becomes the first and only sewage and septage facility in the Philippines and Asia Pacific to earn double ISO accreditation

Maynilad's Dagat-Dagatan Sewage and Septage Treatment Plant, the only ISO9K and ISO14K accredited facility in the Philippines and the Asia Pacific

BUSINESS clean and safe water that conforms to global standards, you can be sure that Maynilad Water's sewage and septage treatment facilities match no less than the best in the world, thus ensuring the protection of the environment.

Last October 18, 2006, Maynilad's Dagat-Dagatan Sewage and Septage Treatment Plant was confirmed both the ISO 9001:2000 and ISO 14001:2000 certifications after an onsite appraisal of its treatment plant conducted by independent auditing body TUV SUD Philippines from September 26 to 29, 2006.

With the simultaneous ISO certification, the Dagat-Dagatan Sewage and Septage Treatment Plant earned the distinction of being the first and only sewage and septage treatment plant in the Philippines and Asia Pacific to meet world class standards for both Quality and Environmental Management Systems.

A team of highly-trained chemists and engineers make sure that waste water coming out of the Dagat-Dagatan Facility is controlled and safe to the environment.

This achievement affirms Maynilad's commitment to service excellence, improving the quality of life of the Filipino, and becoming one of the world's best.

Maynilad's Dagat-Dagatan Sewage and Septage Treatment Plant, the only ISO9K and ISO14K certified facility in the Philippines and Asia Pacific.

Maynilad president Fiorello H. Estuar (third from left) receives the ISO certificate from TUV SUD representative Reynold Nepomuceno. Also in photo (from left) are Maynilad's Environmental Management head Anita Calderero, VP for Operations Irineo Gonzalez, Quality and Environmental Management SAVP Francisco Arellano, and TUV SUD's Pinky Villaruevia.

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Lavish wedding of Burma leader daughter scored

YANGON—A LEAKED VIDEO OF THE LAVISH wedding held on by Burma (Myanmar) junta supremo Than Shwe for his daughter has sparked outrage among ordinary people in the military-ruled and deeply impoverished country.

In a 10-minute clip posted on the Internet, bride Thandar Shwe is seen decked out in trinkets of pearls and sparkling stones that appear to be diamonds, and standing beside her husband as he puts champagne over a cascade of wine glasses.

Even before the video surfaced, the July wedding was the talk of the town in Sangyou Thingyi, Naypyi dawgyi-eze capital, amid reports of gifts including luxury cars and Swiss watch 100 million—nearly three times the 2005 health budget for a population of 50 million.

"You never saw so many diamonds...although they were a bit yellow," said one European resident.

After seeing the cherry-size rocks around her neck, fingers rings dubbed the bride Thandar 'Soto,' which means diamond in Burmese. Her husband is Xaw Phyo Win, an Army major and a deputy director at the commerce ministry.

"It's outrageous, just outrageous, especially when you consider that most Burmese live in extreme poverty," said Aung Zaw, editor of Irrawaddy, a Thailand-based magazine covering Burma, one of Asia's poorest countries after four decades of economic mismanagement by a succession of military rulers.

"Than Shwe was the one who accused other top leaders of corruption whenever he wanted to remove them," he said.

"It's the pot calling the kettle black."

"Ordinary here express public hatred there, so I'm curious to find out why this video was released," Aung Zaw said.

A rare glimpse of the reclusive strongman out of military uniform, the footage has also provided unprecedented rare heaven for analysts eager to read the inner workings of the junta, one of the world's most closed regimes.

"In the seating arrangement, Than Shwe and his deputy were at one table and all the other junta members were at a very distant table. That tells you a lot about the hierarchy," said Sun Aung of the Bangkok-based National Council for the Union of Burma.

The video can be seen at www.irrawaddy.org/bin/thandar_shwe.html. Reuters

Republic of the Philippines
City of Manila
OFFICE OF THE CITY TREASURER

By virtue of the provisions of Section 116 of ordinance 7794, as amended, Revenue Code of the City of Manila (Section 260 of the LGC 1991-R.A. 7160) you are hereby given NOTICE that the undersigned will sell at Public Auction on November 8, 2006 at 2:00 pm at the Rodriguez Hall, Manila City Hall Building, the real property or usable portion thereof herein below specified which are hereby certified to be delinquent in the payment of real property taxes, penalties and costs due thereon as of the date of SALE.

CERTIFIED LIST OF DELINQUENCIES

La Salle brother drowns in Bataan

Sacked Marine commander led move to oust GMA, says Esperon

By Dona Pazzibugan

Esperon said Arroyo and the three mutiny-center commanders were mum/file/against the plan.

He said Arroyo was emphatic about his position and took the end of the discussion get-angry after Lim "in a super-manner" asked him to lead the march.

"That is, if I will not fulfill my constitutional mandate. I quit my board and I will fulfill my constitutional mandate," Arroyo was quoted as saying by Esperon, who added that a "disbanding silence" followed while Lim, Querubin, Miranda and Franco were "noticeably gloomy and tense."

But Palgadoo General Lim (dent) looks: "Sir, look me (now) tactical action, mass-action to down ng mahiko. Sir, we can no longer look out, are still here local. I replied, 'Hold kayo lang ha ang mga mahiko (Pilay are you the only ones with lines to lose)'."

According to Esperon, before Arroyo ended the meeting she/he put everybody, he/retired Miranda, Franco, Lim and Querubin and to push through with their plan or else "he will apply force on them and if they march tomorrow they will on his counter-actions."

Esperon said at around 2:40 a.m. of 24, Arroyo gave "very clear" instructions to the senior service commanders, the deputy chiefs for intelligence and operations, the commanders of the National Capital Region Command and the AFP Counter-Intelligence Group "to suppress or neutralize any destabilization or power grab."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, November 3, 2006
Week/Week in Ordinary Time
Memorials/Saints

1st Reading: Phil 1:1-11
Gospel: Luke 14:1-6

Just Sabbath Jesus had power over a man in the house of a leading Pharisee, and he was carefully watched. In front of him was a man suffering from dropsy, or from edema which causes severe Less swollen Hansens, "It is doubtful to heal on the Sabbath or not?" but no one answered. Jesus then took the man, healed him and sent him away, and he exhibited them, "If your friend or your ox fell into a well on a Sabbath day, who among you doesn't hurry to pull it out?" And they could not answer.

Commentary:

A man falls to the church or Philippi begins with a blessing and calls down God's grace and favor upon them, as will gratitude to God for the community's faithful adherence to the gospel. And for this God prays that God will bring to work to completion right upon the end, and that they will come love and goodness, practicing their new life as servants in the state of God.

Jesus, on the Sabbath, holy to the Lord, asks all righteous believers (his) against the law to heal on the Sabbath, but they remain silent. Jesus heals the man and then asks them to show compassion as one day of God, but they still do not speak.

What is God's prayer to us today?

Rebels seize 22 rifles

TULUNAN—ABOUT 30 COMMUnist guerrillas briefly held an army officer Thursday, then fired him unharmed in exchange for 22 assault rifles from a small military outpost in the southern Philippines, an official said.

Col. Wilfredo Tiburcio was herding near a well when New People's Army guerrillas seized him from behind with drivers, guns, tied his hands and dragged him to his detachment near the farming town of Tulunan, in South Cotabato, Tulunan Mayor Mona Tuvera said.

The rebels demanded from provincial government officials guarding the detachment to surrender their entire 22 assault rifles, a huge amount of ammunition, military uniforms and documents from the outpost. They fled Villanueva and the four militiamen were forced to withdrawing, he said.

The guerrillas also seized the cell phone of some nearby residents before escaping to prevent them from reporting the attack, he told The Associated Press by phone.

Troops were pursuing the rebels, he said.

The rebels have about 7,200 fighters nationwide and are blacklisted internationally as a terrorist group.

They have escalated their attacks in recent months, prompting President Macapagal-Arroyo to order renewed offensives against them and further dim, ing hopes of a resumption of peace talks. Norwegian-brokered AP

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NEGOSYO for OFW's

Democrats on verge of controlling Congress

From page A1

"Republicans are really on the ropes."

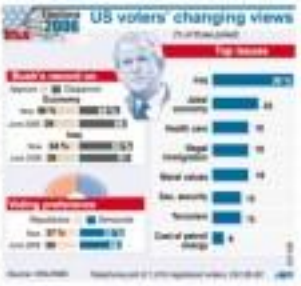
The poll was taken between Oct. 26 and Oct. 28 by 15 of the most competitive House districts across the country. The survey of at least 300 likely voters in each district has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

Democrats have surged in opinion polls around the country this year, propelled by growing voter dissatisfaction with the Iraq war, President George W. Bush and the Republican-led Congress.

The new polls found six Republican incumbents received support from fewer than 40 percent of voters who were asked if they deserved reelection, a very low level that is a danger sign for an incumbent.

The Democratic lead in 12 of the districts polled puts them in position for a big win next week. Another three dozen House races are considered competitive, and Democrats are favored in several districts not even polled.

Those include the Pennsylvania seat of Republican Rep. Mark Kirk, who resigned in disgrace in a scandal over his head nanny, eager to manage state congressional audiences, the focus this year of former Rep. Tom DeLay and the Pennsylvania district of Rep. Tom Sherwood, who suffered his own sex scandal last year.



Voters' expectations

"The members are starting to work against Republicans," Doyle said.

According to the New York Times/CBS News poll, a substantial majority of Americans expect Democrats to gain only if not totally, withdraw US troops from Iraq if they win control of Congress.

A majority also said Republicans would reinforce or increase troop levels in Iraq. In sum, the war should they hold on to power in Capitol Hill.

The poll showed that 29 percent of Americans approved of the way President Bush was managing the war in Iraq, matching the lowest mark of his presidency.

Nearly 70 percent said that Bush did not have a plan to end the war, and 66 percent said that Bush's latest effort to rally public support for the conflict amounted to a change in language but not policy.

Asked issues cited Iraq as the most important one affecting their vote in the coming election, and majorities of Republicans and Democrats said they wanted a change in approach.

Twenty percent said they thought the United States was winning in Iraq, down from a high of 35 percent in January.

In a year when there are many close races and when the parties' success at turning out their voters could prove crucial, Democrats were more enthusiastic than Republicans about voting, and more likely to say they would support their party's candidates, although Republicans were slightly more likely to say they would change one.

Independent voices

Fifty percent of independents voters, a closely watched segment of the electorate in such polarized times, said they intended to vote for the Democratic candidates, versus 33 percent who said they would vote for a Republican.

Among registered voters, 39 percent said they planned to support Republicans, and 52 percent said they would vote for Democrats.

As a rule, generic questions like these, while providing broad insights into the national mood, are often imprecise as a predictor of the outcomes of hundreds of congressional races, where local issues and personalities can shape the result.

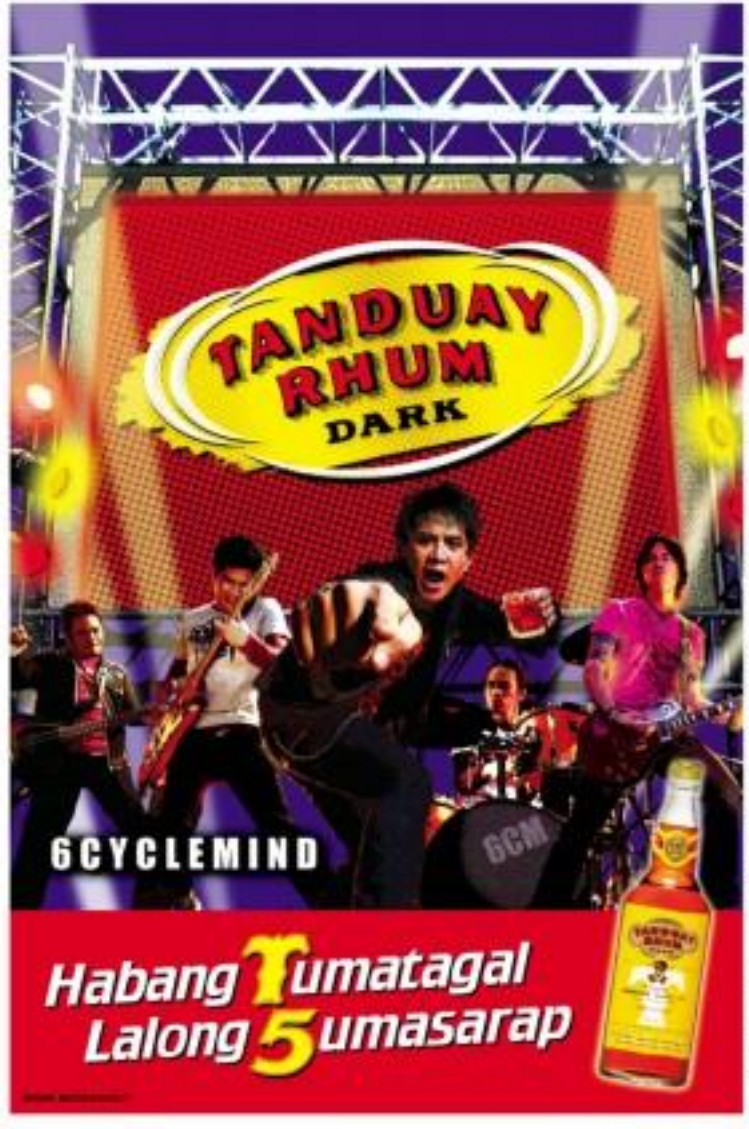
Voters said that neither Democrats nor Republicans had offered a plan for governing should they win on Tuesday, the pollsters said.

Beyond a quirkier exit from Iraq, respondents said they thought a Democratic Congress would be more likely to increase the minimum wage, hold down rapidly rising health and prescription drug costs, improve the economy and — as Republicans have said frequently in these closing days of the campaign — raise taxes.

By a slight margin, more respondents said the threat of terrorism would increase under Republicans than said it would increase under Democrats.

LOWEST PAGE of the Bush presidency: Only 2[illegible] President Bush was managing the war in Iraq, a survey conducted last Friday through Sunday s[illegible] situations.

The nationwide telephone poll was conducted through Tuesday, including voters. The [illegible] were for the



Colleagues defe

From page A1

Evangelista Lourdes "Lali" Arroyo will testify per Edgardo Pacheco of the local, Northwest Airport, the local supervisor of the Bureau of Immigration at the Main (old) airport.

"The investigation of the incident will still continue," Ismael said.

Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez had earlier issued a memo ordering Pacheco to explain himself within 72 hours on two specific points.

According to the memo, a copy of which was shown to the Inquirer, these points were:

- "That you allegedly allowed an unidentified foreigner with a passport to enter your hands, thereby delaying the processing of the line of passengers waiting to be checked in at the OIC (Officer of the Day) departure line at the NAIA 1."
- "That you were also allegedly arrogant and grossly discourteous to a passenger, Evangelista Lourdes Arroyo, when the latter inquired as to why you unduly let the unidentified foreigner bump the passenger line."

The incident took place on Tuesday (not Wednesday as earlier published). The foreigner involved was reportedly a Chinese national.

Pacheo could be suspended for six months to one year if found guilty of the offenses, said immigration regulation chief Eric Mendoza.

Ina Beng Beng Yah Arroyo yesterday explained her memo of withholding Pacheo for letting the foreigner jump the line while she and the rest of the passengers were waiting to be checked in for their flights.

The Five Couple's only daughter said in an interview with PDEA-4 that Pacheo should have observed the proper procedures.

She said Pacheo had even allowed the foreigner to retain his hands.

"This should not happen because it would give rise to the impression that our immigration officers can be bribed," she said. "I pointed out to the investigation officer that it is wrong for anybody to receive the bribe."

percent of Americans approved of the way
ending in the latest New York Times/CBS News
st released five days before the midterm US

conducted Friday
day with 1,081
ng 831 registered
argin of sampling
ister sample is

plus or minus 3 percentage
points, and it is the same for cit-
y registered voters. Reports
from Reuters and New York
Times/dcm/Servilac

IN THE KNOW

What went before

IN AUGUST 2004, MANILA ELECTRIC Co. announced a 17.37-centavo-per-kilowatt-hour rate hike. Meralco earlier, in June, the Energy Regulatory Commission also approved an additional pass-on charge of 13.27 centavos per kWh for Meralco consumers.

This increase like those announced by the generation-rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM), which is a way for power distributors like Meralco to recover from their customers the generation costs charged to them by power suppliers (e.g. National Power Corp.) However, power firms must first seek approval from the ERC before they can pass on to consumers the additional cost.

Not all rate hikes are unpleasant. At smoothly. The 13.25-per-kWh increase, which would have represented the generation cost Meralco incurred from November 2005 to January 2006, was later nullified by the Supreme Court in February this year because Meralco did not notify its customers about the increase.

The ERC and Meralco filed their appeals, but in August this year, the Supreme Court affirmed its February decision and ordered Meralco to refund the 13.27 centavos per kWh it had been collecting.

Refund of '02 excess rates

That was not the first time the high court nullified an increase in Meralco rates. In June 2006, the high court overruled an ERC decision in November 2003 granting Meralco "provisional authority" to increase its rates by 1.0 centavos per kWh.

Currently, Meralco is still in the process of finishing a refund ordered by the Supreme Court in November 2002 for excess charges it imposed since February 1994, which amounted to at least P30 billion.

Meralco's refund program, which began in 2003, is now on its fourth and final phase. This phase covers commercial and industrial customers and mall-size Meralco POSs. billion. As of June this year, the firm has so far refunded P3.4 billion.

The other three phases of its refund program covered residential customers who consumed up to 300 kWh a month (phase 1), residential customers who consumed between 301 kWh and 500 kWh (phase 2), and residential and general service customers like variety stores who used more than 500 kWh a month (phase 3). Inquirer Research

POWER LINES: Meralco will hopefully recover the court-ordered refund with a portion for a few bike. The refund is for money collected from a price hike in 2004 but which the Supreme Court later declared illegal.

Meralco to refund consumers ₱827M

From page B-1

In an advisory to the stock board yesterday afternoon, the ERC said its approval of the Meralco refund scheme had yet to be docketed.

Meralco, owned 23 percent by the Philippine government and 22 percent by a unit of Spanish utility Union Fenosa SA, is still trying to complete a P30-billion refund to consumers ordered by a court in November 2002 after years of over-billing.

For the first three quarters of 2006, Meralco set aside P4.62 billion to cover possible losses from rate disputes before the courts.

Meralco, which supplies power to 4.3 million homes and businesses in Metro Manila and nearby areas, reported a net profit of P329 million in the third quarter after setting aside provisions of P1.59 billion.

Without the provisions, the company's net income for the quarter would have been P1.26 billion from a net loss of P419 million a year earlier.

Meralco's shares open to local investors lost 1.05 percent to P36.5, and its ADshares open in all slid 1.39 percent to P31 in late trade. The main index edged up 0.49 percent. Reuters

nd BI man . . .

is announcement as arrogance. But sometimes, there are immigration officers who are unfortunately also arrogant," he said.

Ilumpad said immigration officers who could no longer be rehabilitated by the training seminar would be removed from frontline service and transferred to other posts in the bureau.

He also acknowledged that "following command responsibility, I know that the buck stops with me."

Incident report

An incident report made available to reporters disclosed the exchange between Padlan and Lidi, who at that time was on her way to Hong Kong with her sister-in-law and came to join her mother and the rest of the Fino family.

The report was prepared and signed by Inspector Palmer Gil, the duty supervisor last Tuesday.

The report read in part: "While inside the counter, I asked Ms Arroyo what happened and she related to me that there was a foreigner who overtook and went ahead of her in the line.

"She said: 'Bakit kami ang pinagsasabihan niya (referring to Officer Padlan) at hindi yung foreigner na sumingit at pumwesto sa counter niya? Sino ba ya?'

"To which the undersigned superior replied: 'Mamaya na po tayo, ma'am. Hindi tayo ang yun.

"Ms Arroyo said that Sagguiguit siya (referring again to Officer Padlan) at sinbi kasi pumila kami dito' (meaning the special lane for diplomats and VIPs). To which Officer Padlan answered: 'Hindi ako nagsigit. Gumbo talaga ang buto ko.'"

In the end, it was still Padlan who processed the travel papers of the Arroyos.

Cleared

A colleague of Padlan narrated that the immigration officer must have failed to recognize Lidi because she was focusing on the travel documents below him.

"That's how he really works. He would sit on the edge of his chair and would be hunched over the travel documents he is processing. Maybe he was talking without really looking at the person he was talking to," the colleague said.

And what was Padlan's reaction when he looked up and saw Lidi?

The colleague said he must have felt dismayed: 'Pakyu-in, para silang pinagtalabanan ng langit at lupa. At parang nahahiyang pero walang-wala tayo.'"

Ilumpad said he received reports that throughout the exchange, Padlan's supervisor was nudging and kicking him in the leg to get his attention to the fact that he was talking back at the President's daughter.

Lesson

In Malacañang, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the incident should be a lesson to all frontline government officials to treat everyone equally and respectfully.

"Lidi was correct in calling the attention of that public servant, even if she was not the daughter of the President, she should have made that observation and called the attention of that [officer]," Ermita said.

He also said the officer was wrong in giving special treatment to a foreigner at the expense of Filipinos.

"We will be respected more by everybody if we treat everyone as equals before our laws. We should not take advantage of others, especially Filipinos," Ermita added. With reports from Lydia S. Salaverria and Christine O. Avendaño

. . .

Ashby said the idea for the "Wanderlock" was the result of online feedback from customers who expressed an interest in looking bigger, just like women using the "Wanderbra."

"When you go to a department store to buy underwear, you usually get a grandmother serving, which is not the ideal way to get feedback," said Ashby.

"Our customers give us feedback. We didn't realize that big is better." Reuters

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

An exception

EDITORIAL

IN RETROSPECT, IT MAY BE THAT PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo was at her most impressive and effective when she was still routinely conducting inspections and behaving as the scolder-in-chief. She was living up to a tradition as old as the Philippine presidency itself. When she would materialize in government offices and papers would fly—because she'd caught policemen watching pornographic videos, or officials were absent from the work place, or citizens were tangled up in red tape—the public not only took a vicarious delight in it, but were reassured that government was where it should be, which is on their side.

But then, desperate to be seen as cuddly and lovable, the President stopped taking officials to task and engaged in gimmickry that was doomed to fall from the start. Her husband also took to filing cases against critics and playing golf. And so it was with a poignant reminder of what could have been—and in a sense, what should always have been—that the public read news of Evangeline Lourdes "Lali" Arroyo speaking up for Juan de la Cruz.

She did so at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. She was incensed over a foreigner jumping the line (Will mind you) without so much as a by-your-leave to anyone or an explanation from the immigration officer at the counter. When the President's daughter asked why this was so, the immigration officer made the career-fatal mistake of snapping back at her.

It turned out that the foreigner jumped the line because he was in danger of missing his flight—and Lali Arroyo was reasonable enough to state that had this been explained from the start, no one standing in the line would surely have objected. The whole thing ended up being a problem of communication. The foreigner was just whisked through without so much as a by-your-leave to those lined up; Lali Arroyo spoke up (and rightly so), only to have a chief servant try to pull rank. And while she has no rank, she was correct to feel that it was anyone's right to ask—and get an answer.

Had the President's daughter not been in the habit of living up (even in VIP lanes), she'd never have seen what her countrymen see all the time: people simply ignoring the rules and then getting upset if anyone dares ask why. The low-key Lali Arroyo has always insisted on being treated simply and fairly in public and has received respect for it, unlike, say, her congressman brother Mikey. It has given her the right to ask questions—and be praised for asking them.

Indeed such have been the steady administration's fundamentally democratic instincts of Lali Arroyo that we can't help but wish that she was the one and not the exception both within the President's family and among her mother's officials. A fundamental sense of fair play tempered by typical Filipino reasonableness is nothing uniquely Lali Arroyo's—it is something shared by most citizens of this Republic. The problem is that it is something alien to those with rank, regardless of which side they occupy in the political divide.

If more officials patiently waited in lines; if more of them gave up their motorcycle escorts and vehicles devoid of any low-numbered license plates and sealed through the traffic everyone else endures; if fewer of them lent their official license plates to nephews and nieces in private schools for the purpose of intimidating policemen and running red lights; if all of them insisted on going through what every citizen has to endure—red tape, long and slow lines in government offices, the hostility of lazy employees or the cursoriness of overworked government workers; if more of them, in a word, got angry over official abuse instead of being absolutely angry at the citizenry this country would a better, more harmonious place.

But it isn't, because our officials refuse to lead in the manner we've come to expect, but rarely find, and that is, by example. A citizenry that seldom encounters an official reasonable would be willing to endure the inconvenience of use, because they would acknowledge that the official must really have to attend to an emergency. Instead, official abuseiveness has become so familiar that it has bred contempt.

So, listen, Lali. And bee-se everyone else all around.

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If Pinoys are hungry, why is GMA gaining weight?

IS IT MERELY MY IMAGINATION OR IS FIDEL Abon Macapagal-Arroyo getting fat? Recent photographs and TV footage of her show her with chubbier cheeks and a little on the heavy side for her size.

GMA watchers differ on the reasons why. Some say it's genetic: that she is not watching her diet at all, contrary to what her critics claim. If she is stressed out, she would lose weight. The fact that she is gaining weight means she is happy and contented.

The other side claims that, on the contrary, it proves that she is under stress. People under pressure can more often to compensate for the stress, or they get fat. Most likely, she's subliming on junk food.

I myself have gained some six more inches, no sick. She may be taking steroids to control a disease, they claim, and she unwinds bloat her body.

Whatever may be the reason, my advice to her is to keep Fats Goldstein's Mike system by heart with as much as possible. My figure shows her look positively slim.

I mentioned the President getting fat because of a report that more and more Filipinos have nothing to eat. With the exception of top government officials, most Filipinos know that already but this time the reality is validated by a survey of the Social Weather Stations showing that 2.9 million families had nothing to eat at least once in the last three months.

On the other hand, a report by a medical association said more and more Filipinos are getting overweight. Isn't that contradictory?

Not at all. In fact, it proves both reports. The economic deterioration is fast itself, another impression popularized by the surveys.

Because fast foods are relatively the cheapest available in urban areas, the poor, especially children, eat them instead of the usual home cooked meals at home. Fast foods are loaded with fat, cholesterol, sugar and salt—plenty of calories but little nutrition. Hamburger is an unhealthy as any food can get. It is loaded with fat, and food is cholesterol. Heavy beef fat. It is made from unsympathetic [which it is pointed as you won't see an original erudition]. French fries are a very popular snack but they are even more unhealthy. The potato strips soak up the food fat and the salt content on them makes you want to eat more and drink more sugar-laden soft drinks.

At the same time, all sorts of junk foods masquerading as fast food and refreshment look on to children. They're either sweet or salty, with little nutrition value. So the children get unhealthy fat, and in a few years, we could have a whole generation of unhealthy obese individuals, unfolding our government with the high medical costs of taking care of them even as the economy loses precious man-hours from sick workers.

Healthy eating used to be taught in primary schools ("Eat green, leafy vegetables, drink milk daily, eat eggs daily, etc."). Not any more. The commercials and advertisements have taken over the job of telling our children what to eat, and most parents are either too busy or too ignorant to teach them otherwise.

What do we say? Children who grow up thinking like our congressmen and local government officials—all but set with little up there.

Not enough nutrition severely retards the development of the brains of young children. And so if we don't give our people enough to eat, we will soon be a nation of retarded adults. If we look at the mental quotient of our congressmen now, it would seem that that time is already upon us.

* * *

Consider that: at this late date, some administration congressmen do not realize yet that the Cha-cha movement is dead and pushing—the railroad has been derailed. They want the train to Cha-cha still speed ahead with the resurrected assembly, but the bridge has already been crashed and by a flood of angry protests. They want GMA to get down and push the stalled train. Time is fleeting, out of us, they say.

But GMA's heart is no longer in it. Understandably, a resurrected assembly would only be shot down by the Supreme Court, and GMA, like her solicitor general, would end up in the exact books as having a perfect record in the tribunal, all losses, as wins.

There is only one reason in the House who still has the delusion that the rotting corpse of the Cha-cha can still be resurrected because that is the only way left for him to be the chief executive of our nation. The chief impediment are the ruling bans because they also have selfish motives: their third and final terms are expiring next year, but a shift to the parliamentary system will give them a term extension, gratis.

And that is the reason we should all want Cha-cha at this time: The members of the proponents are selfish. The changes will only benefit them. According to estimates, two-thirds of the present congressmen and local government officials will find themselves retiring next year. And that is why they are desperate to push Cha-cha which will give them an automatic extension.

But only that, there is no limit to the extension. The new parliament (whose members will be the present congressmen) will decide when to hold the election of MPs. Furthermore, within 45 days after parliament takes over, the just-ratified Constitution will be revised again by them, which means they can do almost anything with it. That's worse than giving them blank checks to write their own salaries.

All these, the figure-flop leaders hid from the people, including those whose signatures they solicited. The media were not given copies of the completely prepared changes. It is clear that deceit was employed. Had they gotten away with it, imagine what they would have done next.

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

SWS survey: Hungry, but why not angry?

THE LATEST SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS survey shows that a record high 15.9 percent of families experienced hunger at least once in the past three months, equivalent to some 2.9 million households in the country. These families remained of those who suffered "severe hunger" or "always" in the past three months and "moderate hunger" (they experienced hunger "only once" or "a few times" in that period).

The SWS findings mean that roughly one out of every six people we see in the streets must have felt severely-caused hunger pangs. This actually got me wondering. Almost three million households and assuming they have at least five family members each, that's a lot of hungry people. Why then don't we see angry mobs rampaging in the streets?

Because hunger by itself does not lead to revolutions, and suffering must be sparked by a sense of injustice to produce social disorder. But if that's the case, isn't the skewed distribution of wealth palpable enough to agitate the hungry? In a land where people pay to see gross because they ingest small more calories than they expend, and plump magazines speak in loving detail of the latest diet fads, while millions subsist on instant noodles? In a third world economy that hosts a Jaguar dealership while there's little collection left along an underdeveloped countryside?

Indeed, globalization has made the rich richer and suffering more lopsided

Now or never for Charter change

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

NO MATTER HOW MUCH OF US WOULD WANT to put a chasm on the relentless pounding of the waves of constitutional change, on the grounds that they have already absorbed much of the emotional energy from more proximate economic portents, we cannot ignore this movement. The last straw in being exhausted from the demands of this continuing issue.

The Supreme Court decision dismissing the people's initiative petition did not stop local units from the side of Charter change. The decision merely shut the door part of people's initiative as a safety valve to ease the pressures of constitutional change. It rechanneled the flows of the Cha-cha movement into other constitutional alternatives: the constituent assembly and constitutional convention.

As a result of that decision, the pressures have now built up on the constituent assembly as the Arroyo administration, frustrated by the Least on people's initiative, is pushing for less than three national assemblies for certain plans on violence against women are not effectively or consistently implemented at national levels.

Among the organizations throwing their support behind the rights and the correspondent actions to government units and the private sector is Isana International, a global organization of executives and professionals which has adopted violence against women as its advocacy.

Dr. Dilia Berry, the first Filipina to be elected president of Isana International, affirmed that "violence against women is an intolerable violation of the human rights of women everywhere."

Berry urged all Isana Clubs to closely monitor their government's activities in response to this new study and to use their country's periodic reports to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to assess women violence to highlight "the disconnection between promises and practice."

The Philippines has just submitted its report to the Cedaw Committee in New York, and the committee will be asking questions on the government's report next month.

The UN secretary general's study confirms the legal position that states are bound to prevent violence against women, to investigate and punish the perpetrators, and to provide effective remedies to the victims.

Berry called on all Isana Clubs worldwide to lead the fight against VAW in their countries, and where there are clubs not yet existing, she urged the organization members to launch their own advocacy and lobbying campaigns.

There are questions over whether constitutional change is absolutely necessary (and there are good arguments pro or con). Those questions cannot be answered by those who are already campaign rallies of calendar due a the right person to undertake the reform. The logic the public mind, as citizens are swept by the strong momentum of political change, being vigorously pushed by the administration, the Senate and the House.

Within the time frame of launching constitutional change, there are strongly competing concerns that are diffusing the focus on Cha-cha. First, the mid-term election confronts incumbents in Congress and in local government offices with the issues of political survival. Second, the election is crucial to the President as an opportunity to receive a fresh mandate of legitimacy and get approval to the approval of her policies and priorities. Third, incumbents are less concerned about their interests in constitutional change than in their political survival.

Fourth, the election outcome is certainly related to a realignment of political forces in both Congress and local governments. The current alignment is a coalition between pro-administration majority in the House of Representatives and local officials. That coalition has been the foundation of the President's power in surmounting efforts to oust her or their through people power in the streets or impeachment. The decision is likely to change the coalition. A realignment will determine whether the President remains a lame duck, incapable of governing effectively.

The push for the constituent assembly is taking place amid uncertainty over the formation of blocks of candidates for House and Senate seats. In the formation of blocks, supporters and especially reelectionists, cannot escape the question: Is their candidacy hitching up on the administration? For many minority in alignment with the administration is a hair of death or a stick or victory? Unfortunately, this question takes precedence over constitutional reform.

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Why state universities?

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

OUR OLDEST GOVERNMENT TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS are the Philippine Normal School and the Manila Trade School (now the Technological University of the Philippines), both established in 1901. The Manila Business School (now the Polytechnic University of the Philippines) was established in 1904. The University of the Philippines was actually a latecomer, coming out as the American University of the Philippines in 1908.

It took years to build up a reputable array of professional institutions that were seen as the best in the country's premier universities. Yet reading our own discussions of donor schools demonstrating, as national and provincial governments cut back on their budgets.

This trend runs counter to what's happening elsewhere. Even in the era of privatization, most countries in the world continue to emphasize public education, with substantial government subsidies, so that even underprivileged can get to the top. Some, as we have seen, are climbing up to join the ranks of the world's best.

In better countries, I'm going to write more about different models for state universities, including corporatization, but today I wanted to run through three main reasons why our government needs to reverse the trend of abandoning public tertiary education.

Access

The most and overarching reason we need public education is fairness. Even in developed countries, there will always be families that need subsidized education. Where it matters is tertiary education, it's not just a matter of taking in "bright but disadvantaged" students. Governments should be giving a chance to those who desire it the most adverse of conditions, and who would be better suited for that than those who come from disadvantaged families? These survivors of hardship are trained to become the trailblazers and innovators.

This takes us to the second reason we need public education: the variety that encourages alternative thinking. Because private schools tend to make money, they tend to cater to those seven-market demands. That's why we have all these private schools offering computer courses (or business courses) and why some of those computer schools are also now offering nursing.

State-run universities are there to transcend those flavors of the month, encouraging long-term needs for the country. Singapore, for example, identified biotechnology many years ago as an opportunity for national development, and developed this field in its state universities. All that Singapore is paying off now, while a spin-off Singaporean region is as well as organizations they've been able to lure in to develop the industry's biotechnology industry.

I'm not just talking about high-tech courses. Of for example, is the only university in the country that offers the full complement of social sciences: anthropology, sociology, geography, history, political science, linguistics and demography, with philosophy thrown into the deal. The social sciences are important because we need to make intelligent, informed decisions in the areas of planning, so that we produce citizens rather than technicians.

We forget, too, that the bulk of our elementary and high school teachers come from public educational institutions, led by the Philippine Normal University. Private universities tend to concentrate on graduate education and professional courses. The American came in and established the Manila Trade School, the Manila Business School and the Philippine Normal School, all essentially vocational institutions aimed at the development of civil servants, office workers and technicians.

The American University of the Philippines offered higher education to students such as medicine, but it was still set up around a colonial agenda, a need to produce Filipinos who, they thought, would best implement the United States' blueprint for the Philippines. In the end, they were the state's main interested, yet, primarily because all those late-comers were non-scientists, they never bet known than produced the students and lawyers who would rise to agitate for independence and, later, the activists and leaders who would challenge corruption and dictatorships.

It all boils down to common sense and equity. The state schools established to address needs still allow poorer families access to quality education, but it is also to the state schools' independence from government interference that allows for a safe and nurturing environment for inquisitive and innovating minds. In the long run, the benefits aren't just for tuition and board and lodging, but also for the nation as a whole, as Filipinos are given a fighting chance to own and develop their country, rather than following the whims and priorities of other nations.

More on the world's best

Last week, I featured the leading universities of the world, as listed in the Times Higher Education Supplement. Singapore's National University is ranked 18th in the World rankings. Apparently there's strong interest in these rankings, given the number of inquiries I received from friends after the article was published.

So I prepared to send the full list as a colleague in Hong Kong asked that others I was analyzing the entire list for business reasons. I was also curious to see how Asian universities, and had two received New Zealand universities. It is difficult thinking of Australia and New Zealand as part of Asia, but I extended to include them for purposes of comparison with the listings that site now defines Asiatech produced from 1996 to 2000.

Here there are some figures from the new list of leading Asian universities. Of the leading 500 universities in the world, 122 are based in Asia (others are as follows: Japan [31], Australia [18], China including Hong Kong [17], Taiwan [9], India [7], Thailand [7], New Zealand [6], South Korea [6], Malaysia [4], Indonesia [4], the Philippines [4], Singapore [3], Pakistan [2], Pakistan [1], Bangladesh [1], Vietnam, except Pakistan and Bangladesh, had universities that ranked higher than the Philippines'.

The new ranks doesn't affect the global rankings of Philippine universities, which UP retains here: UP in 201th, De la Salle in 301th, Ateneo de Manila in 401th and the University of Santo Tomas in 501th.

Nicole crying out for justice

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WOMEN THE WORLD OVER ARE HAILING THE 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "Ending Violence against Women: From Words to Actions." It is a 130-page study released early last month during the 50th General Assembly of the United Nations.

The study is a comprehensive document that clearly defines violence against women whatever this occurs – in a domestic situation, in a community place of work, in the context of war or conflict – as a violation of human rights. It is also more than time that national standards for action plans on violence against women are not effectively or consistently implemented at national levels.

Among the organizations throwing their support behind the rights and the correspondent actions to government units and the private sector is Isana International, a global organization of executives and professionals which has adopted violence against women as its advocacy.

Dr. Dilia Berry, the first Filipina to be elected president of Isana International, affirmed that "violence against women is an intolerable violation of the human rights of women everywhere."

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Berry called on all Isana Clubs worldwide to lead the fight against VAW in their countries, and where there are clubs not yet existing, she urged the organization members to launch their own advocacy and lobbying campaigns.

Give UDHA a chance

COMMENTARY

Anna Marie J. Karaan
Architect and Chairperson Social Issues

THE PHILIPPINES HAS SUCH A DISMAL RECORD ON implementing laws that when I write across one that is being taken seriously by its implementors, I am overcome with disbelief.

In 1992, Congress enacted the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA), which President Corazon Aquino signed into law as Republic Act 7279. What relieved to us the law can be reduced to this. Any Urban who desired the human conditions on housing where the law was passed's, UDHA is there to help them, and more specifically, the local officials and landowners, but its provisions regarding the practice of squatter eviction and demolition. That the law requires due process in the form of community consultations and 30-day notices, and proper relocation for qualified households opposed to those who are summarily forced to squatters.

Many public officials and even judges subscribe to the opinion so much so that the most number of violations of the law have been committed by government agencies and personnel. Proof of this is the recent Supreme Court decision that has held President Macapagal-Arroyo personally liable for damages for her role in the demolition of informal settlements in Sapang Palay in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan in 1997. The Supreme Court ruled that Arroyo, then Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), was directly responsible for the violation of the residents' rights to adequate housing, relocation and due process.

Even this decision, however, does not stop local officials and landowners, but its provisions regarding the practice of squatter eviction and demolition. That the law requires due process in the form of community consultations and 30-day notices, and proper relocation for qualified households opposed to those who are summarily forced to squatters.

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Commentary

Anna Marie J. Karaan
Architect and Chairperson Social Issues

UDHA to deal with the problem of homelessness and the illegal occupation of lands.

The first is to implement or take a census of all informal settlers' families in the city or municipality. Then, the local government is mandated to conduct a land inventory to identify public and private lands that are suitable and can be made available for social housing. Finally, the local governments should implement a social housing program and set the stage for actual housing.

As can be seen from these steps, good information on at least two things is required before one can actually implement the protective provisions of the law. First, there must be good information on the housing problem. Second, there must be good information on the location of the available land within their jurisdiction to respond meaningfully to the problem.

In 1998, a census team of NGOs, among them the Institute on Church and Social Issues, the Urban Poor Associates and CO Multiworks, started a national census of urban poor communities. The results of local government compliance with the various provisions of the UDHA. Starting with 26 cities in the first round, the number of participating cities grew to 32 by the fourth monitoring period in 1996.

The results thus far show a high degree of noncompliance in the implementation of the law's provisions. Most cities have inherently complied with the law, implementing the measure. On the law, voluntary legislative and land inventory has not progressed. On this day last year, I wrote to Subic with my colleagues to offer our services to help the city government in participation in the census. I had to do this, I was happy living with my family. I never realized that my presence in Subic would end in a tragedy. On this day last year, my life changed.

Today, I am a widow. I have returned to Subic. And with my return, I have also the return of the UDHA there, the ship on which the entire Social Action Center, Urban Poor Associates and Community Organizers Multiworks have embarked. Their spirit and thousands of dedicated servicemen for their love and reverence. Again they are looking for women to minimize and explore. On this day last year many women will be raped as I was raped then? How many women will be battered as money by the wounds, or abandon with their souls and bodies in tatters? How long will they keep hearing that laughter they do not what they are being raped?

Violence against women (VAW) is violence against my rights. And neither was the Dupol's arrest filed to me after I decided to pursue the case. Instead of telling my side in my fight, the government took steps to make my situation much harder. I have not received a single cent of support from the government. Besides, under the secretary of justice has even repeatedly defended my rapists.

During the census daily trips to the Makati Regional Trial Court, to the office of the Public Attorney's Office (PAO), to the prosecutor's office for my rapists victim a raped repeatedly inside and outside the courtroom while the case is being tried. In the face of all the threats and intimidation that I have gone through in the past year, only by belief in God's justice and the love of my family and friends and of women have been my sole source of strength and resolve not to surrender. My decision to pursue the case should be proof of my conviction that Daniel Smith, Chad Carpenter, Keith Silkwood and Timothy Orpilleza deserve to be in prison.

"They should be made to suffer for the indignities they forced me to go through. They should be put behind bars. Their ruthless punishment should serve as an example for the whole world and to American visitors poisoned.

"He this day, I also fight on for justice!"

Why state universities?

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

OUR OLDEST GOVERNMENT TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS are the Philippine Normal School and the Manila Trade School (now the Technological University of the Philippines), both established in 1901. The Manila Business School (now the Polytechnic University of the Philippines) was established in 1904. The University of the Philippines was actually a latecomer, coming out as the American University of the Philippines in 1908.

It took years to build up a reputable array of professional institutions that were seen as the best in the country's premier universities. Yet reading our own discussions of donor schools demonstrating, as national and provincial governments cut back on their budgets.

This trend runs counter to what's happening elsewhere. Even in the era of privatization, most countries in the world continue to emphasize public education, with substantial government subsidies, so that even underprivileged can get to the top. Some, as we have seen, are climbing up to join the ranks of the world's best.

In better countries, I'm going to write more about different models for state universities, including corporatization, but today I wanted to run through three main reasons why our government needs to reverse the trend of abandoning public tertiary education.

Access

The most and overarching reason we need public education is fairness. Even in developed countries, there will always be families that need subsidized education. Where it matters is tertiary education, it's not just a matter of taking in "bright but disadvantaged" students. Governments should be giving a chance to those who desire it the most adverse of conditions, and who would be better suited for that than those who come from disadvantaged families? These survivors of hardship are trained to become the trailblazers and innovators.

This takes us to the second reason we need public education: the variety that encourages alternative thinking. Because private schools tend to make money, they tend to cater to those seven-market demands. That's why we have all these private schools offering computer courses (or business courses) and why some of those computer schools are also now offering nursing.

State-run universities are there to transcend those flavors of the month, encouraging long-term needs for the country. Singapore, for example, identified biotechnology many years ago as an opportunity for national development, and developed this field in its state universities. All that Singapore is paying off now, while a spin-off Singaporean region is as well as organizations they've been able to lure in to develop the industry's biotechnology industry.

I'm not just talking about high-tech courses. Of for example, is the only university in the country that offers the full complement of social sciences: anthropology, sociology, geography, history, political science, linguistics and demography, with philosophy thrown into the deal. The social sciences are important because we need to make intelligent, informed decisions in the areas of planning, so that we produce citizens rather than technicians.

We forget, too, that the bulk of our elementary and high school teachers come from public educational institutions, led by the Philippine Normal University. Private universities tend to concentrate on graduate education and professional courses. The American came in and established the Manila Trade School, the Manila Business School and the Philippine Normal School, all essentially vocational institutions aimed at the development of civil servants, office workers and technicians.

The American University of the Philippines offered higher education to students such as medicine, but it was still set up around a colonial agenda, a need to produce Filipinos who, they thought, would best implement the United States' blueprint for the Philippines. In the end, they were the state's main interested, yet, primarily because all those late-comers were non-scientists, they never bet known than produced the students and lawyers who would rise to agitate for independence and, later, the activists and leaders who would challenge corruption and dictatorships.

It all boils down to common sense and equity. The state schools established to address needs still allow poorer families access to quality education, but it is also to the state schools' independence from government interference that allows for a safe and nurturing environment for inquisitive and innovating minds. In the long run, the benefits aren't just for tuition and board and lodging, but also for the nation as a whole, as Filipinos are given a fighting chance to own and develop their country, rather than following the whims and priorities of other nations.

More on the world's best

Last week, I featured the leading universities of the world, as listed in the Times Higher Education Supplement. Singapore's National University is ranked 18th in the World rankings. Apparently there's strong interest in these rankings, given the number of inquiries I received from friends after the article was published.

So I prepared to send the full list as a colleague in Hong Kong asked that others I was analyzing the entire list for business reasons. I was also curious to see how Asian universities, and had two received New Zealand universities. It is difficult thinking of Australia and New Zealand as part of Asia, but I extended to include them for purposes of comparison with the listings that site now defines Asiatech produced from 1996 to 2000.

Here there are some figures from the new list of leading Asian universities. Of the leading 500 universities in the world, 122 are based in Asia (others are as follows: Japan [31], Australia [18], China including Hong Kong [17], Taiwan [9], India [7], Thailand [7], New Zealand [6], South Korea [6], Malaysia [4], Indonesia [4], the Philippines [4], Singapore [3], Pakistan [2], Pakistan [1], Bangladesh [1], Vietnam, except Pakistan and Bangladesh, had universities that ranked higher than the Philippines'.

The new ranks doesn't affect the global rankings of Philippine universities, which UP retains here: UP in 201th, De la Salle in 301th, Ateneo de Manila in 401th and the University of Santo Tomas in 501th.

Why so many poor people?

LETTERS

VIDEO 1 THOSE OF THE HELP: I guess I don't think of Bermuda as the Bermuda cheese. I think of it as the country's rooms and laundry people who are suffering from poverty, as of July 2006, the Philippines had a total population of 83,054,627; a total growth by around 2.0 percent each year. Forty percent of this total is to be below the poverty line, and 36.8 percent experienced hunger or known as in the newborn months, while 4.2 percent experienced severe hunger.

These figures might be alarming but it didn't surprise me that almost half of our population is living a life below the acceptable standards of decent existence.

Every day runs to clean on the streets of Metro Manila, we see young and old people begging for a few pesos, or sifting through garbage piles for whatever food they may be able to salvage. In fact, documentaries or movies about child labor, unemployed and hungry Filipinos, and abused overseas Filipino workers, who are struggling to break free from the bondage of poverty, are not uncommon.

It is also a fact that the ranks of middle-class Filipinos are diminishing in number. This is evident in an price are, and I don't think it does anybody else. To be surprised about this situation is to be dense.

Why are we in this state? I can't answer the question as accurately as I want to because I myself am wondering why we got into this fix. What I do know is that a substantial percentage of the population growth is coming from those who don't earn enough to raise families. If there members' comment to me, they will only become even poorer.

With more and more Filipino professionals and skilled workers leaving the country, the government will face the more difficult task of overcoming this problem and attending to the needs of our people.

—EUGENE CORDING,
eugene_cording@yahoo.com

Time to split up Napocor plants

THIS IS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL of Neri Enpas, president of the National Association of Electric Cooperatives Inc (Enpas Inc, to construct the existing set of separate corporate entities out of each plants of the National Power Corp. (PEN 10/19/06). With the ongoing controversy brewing the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM), there is sense to the proposal.

Under Enpas's proposal, Napocor plants will operate as if they are separate and independent. Thus each plant for its plans will establish its own level of trading transactions and operational expense. This should give the plants in Luzon a competitive edge against trade rivals and with competitive efficiency. This will in turn encourage more interested companies to enter the market and make electricity trading in the open market a reality.

Similarly, a Napocor plant will always earn increased efficiencies and cost savings. This will make companies much easier to collaborate with the progress in private Napocor.

On the other hand, who will sell Napocor assets if this proposal materializes to success?

—JULIE ORILL,
cpsh@epwave.com,
Kabuhayang Scarecrow sa Interweaving Multi-Income,
Edukasyon@yahoo.com

Reasons for baby boomers to cheer

ALL DEFINITELY PEOPLE IS their mid-50s, cheer up and enjoy the best of our last promising years!

Why should we worry and be pessimistic more than any previous—in this era? These things happened to our years:

1. The first walk of man on the moon.

2. The coming of the undisputed King of Rock and Roll, Elvis Presley and The Beatles, the first pop band that became popular worldwide with no studying music in America.

3. The first successful heart transplant.

4. The spectacular memorable "The Ten Commandments," "The Green Pastures," "A Bridge Too Far."

5. The invention of the satellite, telecommunications and cell phones.

6. The Munich and the Gemini.

7. The Three Stooges, Charlie Chaplin, the fascinating James Bond series, and the dazzling, sweeping, humorous Martin Mooney and Elizabeth Taylor.

8. The invention of the television, worldwide satellite communications and modern personnel administration and retrofit.

—ROLANDO,
San Jose, Occidental Mindoro

No change: a major irritant for Filipino shoppers

I AM ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE who invest many things, even the small and the inconsequential. And since I do, I always ponder why things have to be the way they are. I do not accept everything with total trust for the sake of time-honored tradition. Yes, I am not making my life easy.

Unlike most other consumers, credit and ATM debit cards are not the norm in our country yet. Perhaps, for this reason, Dance is prime as a major irritant for customers when transacting with business establishments such as supermarkets or Manila—change. Many of the establishments' employees do not keep enough change for their customers.

To show how prevalent this bad practice is, let me relate how my sister involving me and an innocent friend.

The friend's mom was asking me to accompany us taking me to mobile bills because a tile driver didn't have change for P500. All this, while the tile driver waited downstairs, with his motor running, for my friend to come back with his money. I, too, had several experiences with a tile driver who didn't have change even just for P100.

The same friend refused to me this story. She had chosen to a busy bus terminal to do the Metro drawing area and had to store for half-about so she could leave her dismay group for another engagement. She had to wait over a FLOOD. She had to P500-plus and at the window, she tendered in her balance of the size of the bill. The cashier then proceeded to tell her women to see the others in the dinner group to come up with small, instead of telling the unknown to get the needed change in the denomination done.

At a major supermarket chain in the capital of a province in Luzon, I was standing in line to pay for my purchases when I witnessed this episode between the cashier at the check-out counter and the customers. The customer became hassled when a customer gave a P500-bill for her purchases. The new customer gave the cashier another P500-bill for her purchases. The cashier then turned to me—I was next in line—to ask me if I could change her money. I seemed to get out of there quickly, and having the change she needed, I changed the cashier's P500-bill.

In the fourth instance, I was shopping in a tourist handicraft store in the Intramuros area and was ordered a relatively quiet evening when another colleague was trying to get somewhere when you ask them if they have cash in smaller denominations.

What's the big deal?

The capitalism is participative most peculiar and service. In return, is a business establishment, you make the sale and earn the profits. It is the responsibility of the store, are the customer, to be properly equipped to process the transaction.

To me, it is a big deal if business establishments or service providers don't learn change. They should have their customers some courtesy by keeping enough change handy. Pens and simple.

—TESS PITES,
tbalcad (@)

all about
KIDS FAIR
Oct 20 - Nov. 12
Lummy Tune Shoes
P 249
Before
Feeding Bottles
20
Toy Car w/ Push Handle
P 699
Before
Kiddie Shoes
P 149.50
Before
Polo Shirt
P 140
Before
Beaded Watch
P 89.75
Before
Pants
P250
Before
Girls' Wear
P 250
Before
Kiddie Cap
10
Activities:
Metro Legazpi
Metro Lucena
Metro Mandaue
Nov. 4
Nov. 5
Nov. 11
Nov. 11 & 12
Nov. 12
Nov. 18
Nov. 19
Nov. 25
Nov. 26
Nov. 26
Nov. 26

Across the NATION

Troops for Asean meet given curfew

By Jaime B. Bolanoy
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—SOLDIERS SENT here to provide security for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit in December were restricted to their camps after two separate incidents involving drunken soldiers and abusive officers on Monday and Wednesday.

Maj. Gen. Emilano Luna, commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Central Command (CentCom), said he ordered the pretesting of troops to instill discipline among soldiers and officers.

He issued a move warning to the 4,200 army soldiers and Marines who have been deployed in Cebu as a security force for the Asean Summit not to misbehave or face administrative actions.

"We already issued the guidelines and policies. Con-sanay nanakaabot and we expect all the commanders of different units to actively impose them," Luna said.

Almost 4,500 soldiers from the 66th Infantry Battalion, 9th Marine Battalion, Landing Team, Light Reaction Company (LRC) and other elite units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines are deployed to secure the perimeter security delegates of the Asean Summit set in Cebu from Dec. 11-14.

The army soldiers will not be allowed to leave their camp in Mactan-Lapulapu town if they don't have official mission orders, according to Lt. Col. Vincent Nicdican, commander of the army's 66th Infantry Battalion from Catbalogan, Samar.

Lt. Col. Martin Pinto, commander of the 9th Marine Battalion Landing Team that came from Subi province, said Marines were given a 10 p.m. curfew and would no longer be allowed to leave their camp at the Naval Forces Central (Nalscom) in Lapulapu City after that time.

The developed after last Monday evening's incident when three Marines were arrested by the police for drunken behavior and refused to pay their bill inside a girlie bar in Lapulapu City.

On Wednesday evening, two officers, one from the Philippine Army and the other from the elite LRC of the Special Operation Command, and two other soldiers were arrested of beating up a policeman after they were accused outside a girlie bar also in Lapulapu City for a traffic violation.

A MARINE stands in attention during inspection in Fort Bonifacio. Marines were sent to Cebu to help secure the Asean Summit, but ran into trouble for misdemeanors. (INQUIRER)

RED TIDE WARNING

Selling of shellfish continues in Sorsogon

LEGAZPI CITY—(UNPDI) REPORTS on the death of another red tide victim on Monday, market vendors here said is Daraga, Albay persist in selling shellfish from Donsol.

The latest victim was identified as Arjay Arnaiza, 5, sibling of the two victims who died on Oct. 27.

Eleven more individuals were rushed to the Fernando Memorial Hospital for shellfish poisoning after eating crabs.

Reynaldo Lyanza, whose family of seven were all taken to the hospital, said they were forced to eat shrimp for lack of food to eat. Most of their neighbors, to whom they had sold some of their shellfish, also fell ill.

Despite the government exposure last week on the gathering and carting of shellfish, vendors in public markets in Legazpi City and in neighboring town of Daraga continued selling shellfish from Sorsogon waters, which had been reported to be have been responsible for red tide there last week.

Ned Alda Peña, 29, of Barangay Alnda in Daraga town said he did not believe there was red tide and that the people reported dead in Sorsogon City could have eaten something else aside from shellfish.

Alda Peña, who sells shellfish from Pilar, Sorsogon for P25 per kg at the Daraga public market, said some customers returned after they bought after they learned of reports on red tide.

Rodrigo Miranda, 53, of Bitan Daraga, Albay said there had been a decrease in his earnings since news about the red tide broke out but, Jose Alan Cleto Peña, he said he did not believe the shellfish he was selling from Bacalbalcalan, Sorsogon was not safe for human consumption.

Irma Mora, aquaculturist II of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, said selling shellfish from the Sorsogon Bay was not allowed.

"If test area in the province was found out to be invaded by red tide, we impose a shellfish ban even on other areas within that province in the mix," she said.

She said BFAR had deployed quarantine officers to public markets who would confiscate shellfish from Sorsogon Bay. Bobby Labadan and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Subic-Clark project fuels land dispute, threatens Aeta group

FLORESBLANCA, PAMPANGA—A British-funded literacy program among Aetas in Olongapo City has been derailed for two months now due to a dispute over lands near the Subic-Clark Rattler Expressway.

Noel Mamelo, director of the Regular Education and Deped's Empowerment Object, on Thursday confirmed the delay in the implementation of the alternative learning system program. The interministerial support institution (which is assisting the project aiding 50 families, Mamelo said.

The school has been built by Deped's partner, the Development Action for Grassroots Initiatives, Inc. Barangay council and the Department of Education, according to village head Rusty Manuel.

The delay came as the Montemayor family continued to claim about 10 hectares in Barangay, where the Aeta live and till lands.

Amelia Caballero, an Aeta elder, has insisted that the lands being claimed by the Montemayors were part of the tribe's ancestral domain.

Ulang ginagamasan ni Inday, dito kami lumaki. Ito ang aming lupa. Dito nakatira ang mga ninuno namin. Ito ang buhay namin. Ayaw naming umalis dito," Caballero told the Inquirer in a visit on Thursday to his orchard planted to about 100 mangoes already ripening that day.

Edgar Ajoang, the tribal leader, expressed worry over a number of violent incidents that had broken out since July. The land is about a kilometer west of the Pi-Kau expressway.

Manuel said the Montemayors were planning to sell the land to Korean buyers.

Speculation

Land speculation and massive buying had occurred in areas near the Japanese-funded highway that links the economic zones of Subic, Clark and Luzon, reports from the agriculture and environment departments showed.

Ajoang said that on Wednesday, Montemayor's aides identified as Fred Mina and Ben Bacani, "sinugod ni Ramonito, na Aeta nila ay pinasok ko daw kinjdan.

"We have been divided by this issue. Some are afraid now but we are defending our land no matter what," Ajoang said.

More than 15 children and 20 adults have suffered from the pregnancy delay, he said, adding that it was the first school in the village.

"Umupo na ko sana Aeta nang (ma) magulo (Ma) we begin(ning) to be better off here and (the conflict started)," he added.

Town officials claimed that the Montemayors had filed an administrative case against Manuel for "abuse of authority and usurpation."

The town council had dismissed the case. Manuel showed a land title showing that the land/estates in the disputed property were owned by the North Philippine Union Mission of Seventh Day Adventist Inc.

Tony Sillon, treasurer of the General Luna Adventist Academy located in the village, said the Adventist has no plans to evict the Aetas.

Leaving Aetas alone

"We also have no opposition to further constructions projects for Aetas," he said. The mission was reportedly an affidavit to assure that commitment.

Caballero said that while four Aeta families had agreed to be paid damages on their crops—at P1,0,000 per mango tree—the rest would fight to remain.

"Before the highway was built, there were buyers who came. I told them 'Can I plant mango on your money? Can I plant rice on your money? No I can't so go away and find other lands...' Inday, dito kami lumaki. Ito ang aming lupa. Dito nakatira ang mga ninuno namin. Ito ang buhay namin. Ayaw naming umalis dito," he told. Reuters Virgin, Inquirer Central Luzon

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Scheduled Domestic Passenger Traffic
July 2005 to August 2006*

Airline	Pax Carried	Seats	Share (%)
PAL	4,380,903	5,877,350	48.8%
Airline No. 2	2,762,885	3,984,683	30.8%
Airline No. 3	1,041,459	1,549,049	11.6%
Airline No. 4	512,922	1,049,513	5.7%
Airline No. 5	277,346	398,257	3.1%
TOTAL	8,975,515	12,858,852	100%

* Latest certified figures by the Civil Aeronautics Board, Department of Transportation and Communications. Share percentage refers to Passengers Carried.

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RP credit gets upgrade from 'negative'

First page A1
Back B proceed to the first page

Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings removed their negative outlook on the country much earlier this year.

Moody's, the last of the three major international credit rating agencies to remove its negative outlook on the Philippines, earns the sovereign risk four notches below investment grade.

S & P's rating is three notches below Moody's investment grade and Fitch Ratings is two notches below investment grade.

Reaffirmation

Policymakers and financial market experts welcomed Moody's positive action on the ratings outlook, believed by many to be long overdue.

"The outlook upgrade is a reaffirmation of the positive view of the financial markets and investors on the economy," said Government Financial Strategist Group of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

"Moody's decision is definitely a vote of confidence in the sustainability of the country's economic reform initiatives," he said.

Treasury said he was expecting an actual credit rating upgrade from one of the three major global credit rating agencies within the next six months.

Moody's in the last of the three most influential credit rating agencies to remove its negative outlook on the Philippines, sees the sovereign risk four notches below investment grade.

The removal of the "negative" outlook, as plans raise the "Baa3/ P3" issue ratings from the Cabinet that threatened to topple the former administration in July last year, eliminated risks of a sovereign credit rating downgrade by Moody's at least over the next 12 to 18 months.

"We stated in February that a change in the Philippines' rating outlook is visible from negative would depend on the achievement by the government of its 2006 fiscal targets coupled with the prospects of further deficit reduction in 2007 and beyond," said Moody's vice president Thomas Byrne.

"Based on fiscal performance through the first three quarters of 2006, it seems likely that the government will readily meet its deficit reduction target for the year as a whole. Although the full-year result for expanded value-added tax (VAT) receipts is not available, total revenue collection has come in close to the annual income likely to reach the annual target," Byrne said.

Goals for this year include generating P75 billion in additional revenue from the VAT and reducing the national government's budget deficit to 1.2 percent of GDP (gross domestic product).

Foreign debt prepayment

The modest deficit and the country's positive growth prospects position of the government have allowed it to start modest foreign debt prepayment, helping reduce its reliance on foreign currency denominated debt and ease its debt burden, according to Byrne.

But while the government's debt rating has stabilized, Moody's is not inclined to change the outlook to "positive," a precursor of a credit rating upgrade.

"Looking forward, we believe the government will continue to face formidable challenges in strengthening its fiscal position, and deficit reduction may not be as readily achievable as in the past several years," Byrne said.

Mega elections

He said political spending would increase in the run-up to the congressional elections scheduled for May 2007.

The need to improve the country's very weak revenue generation limits budget public infrastructure in the budgets in 2007 and beyond, according to Moody's vice president.

"Exceptionally large increases in revenue generation achieved through reform and administrative tightening may have run their course," Byrne said.

"Political will on the part of the administration and strong support in Congress will be necessary for the Philippines to sustain its recent accomplishments," he said.

Still highly indebted

In the meantime, he said, despite the marked improvement in fiscal performances in the past year, the Philippines remained highly indebted compared with other countries.

Byrne said government debt-to-GDP and government debt-to-revenue ratios would likely remain at levels well above the 'B' median range into 2006, and interest payments on debt would likely continue to absorb more than 30 percent of central government revenue this year and the next, despite the fall in domestic interest rates and a stronger exchange rate in 2006.

"For the rating to move up, there will need to be continued significant deficit reduction and increased reliance on external financing by the public sector," said Byrne. "Ultimately, debt ratios will need to be reduced from their current high levels and will need to move much closer to levels consistent with 'Ba'-rated countries."

He said a relapse in fiscal discipline or massive economic instability that leads to disruptions in government's access to debt markets or to renewed volatility in exchange or interest rates would be negative credit developments.

Manolo Ayee, senior vice president for finance management at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., said Moody's improved outlook could boost the prices of foreign currency-denominated Philippine bonds by 10 to 15 basis points.

"It will further improve investor confidence, which is what we need to see in Philippine bonds and GS (local currency-denominated) government securities," Ayee said.

He said Philippine foreign currency bonds, which had already rallied and brought to be set for profit-taking in the wake of rising sovereign bonds, would likely have more room to go up.

Citigroup Global Markets, in a recent commentary said: "On the back of outside fiscal improvements, we think Moody's revision of the negative outlook to stable is long overdue."

"Though the Philippines has not yet reached the phase of Brazil or Mexico, which has been actively buying back external debt, we believe the government is taking the right steps to gradually reduce foreign currency exposure of its government debt profile, which would be credit positive," Citigroup said.

GMA: RP-Japan trade deal will go to Senate for ratification

Front page A1

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita earlier issued a statement, also seeking the President's approval of a DFA plan to send the agreement to the Senate by next month.

But Ermita also said that the deal had been "in force" 20 days after it was signed and that he would notify Senate ratification was still necessary.

The President and then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi signed the agreement on Sept. 9 on the sidelines of the Asia-Europe Meeting in Helsinki, Finland.

If the Senate, the Philippines' treaty-ratifying body, does not approve the deal, there will be no agreement, said Pavlin. Japan will understand this, he said, because like the Philippines, Japan also needs ratification of the agreement by its parliament

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2006

NEWS

1 missing after Pinoys, Swedes saved from ship

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN—A SWEDISH FREIGHTER capsized and sank in a storm on the Baltic Sea, leaving the 14 crew members from the Philippines and Sweden fighting for their lives in five-meter waves, rescue officials said.

Suffering from hypothermia and shock, 13 people were being cared for in the country-seaside hospitals in a high-tech rescue operation hampered by low visibility and powerful winds, the Swedish sea rescue service said.

The search continued for the missing crew member, whose nationality was not known.

The crew—10 Filipinos and four Swedes—jumped into the frigid waters as the 132-meter "Finnbirch" went down between the Swedish islands of Gotland and Oland, rescue spokesperson Peter Lindquist said.

The roll-on, roll-off vessel was on its way from Helsinki, Finland, to Aarhus, Denmark, when it got caught in a storm that lashed northern Europe on Wednesday with icy winds, snow and sleet, ship owner Lindholm Shipping said. The freighter was listing badly for hours before she sank.

"We can only speculate on the reason," Lindholm Shipping chief executive Jan-Lennart Gill The Associated Press. "We don't have enough information about what could have happened."

There was 260 tons of oil aboard the ship, but it was not immediately clear if any of it had leaked out, Swedish news agency TT reported.

Before the ship sank, rescuers refloated from trying to hoist the crew because of the worsening weather conditions.

"We've got poor visibility, strong winds and high waves," Lindquist said. "Working under such circumstances is not risk-free."

The crew members were flown to a hospital in Kalmar on the Swedish mainland. They were suffering from hypothermia and one had a broken leg, rescue service spokesperson Mattias Tenser said.

High winds and heavy winds had made it impossible for rescuers to approach the vessel.

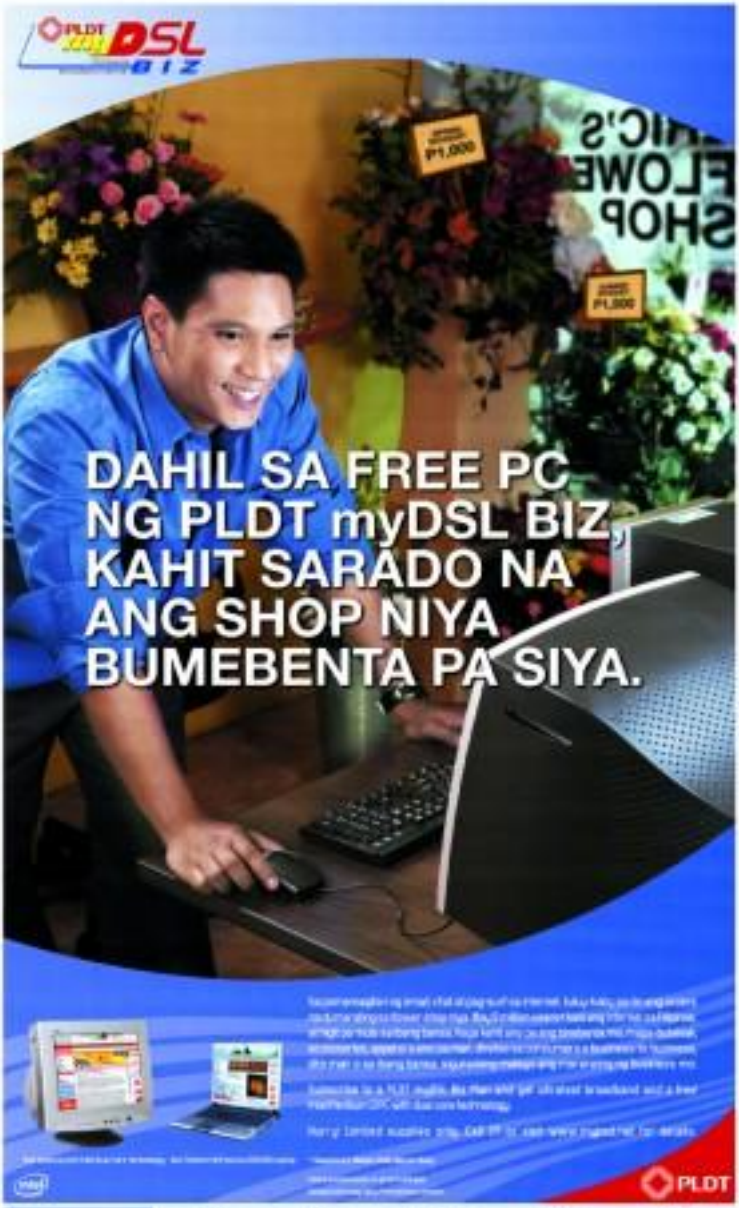
The crew sat on the hull before the ship sank down off the southeastern Swedish coast.

The crew were uninjured aside, and were in radio contact with nearby ships but were unable to launch life rafts.

The ship was built in 1979, had a dead weight of 8,500 tons and was operated by Helsinki-based Finnlines, Larsen said. He did not know what cargo the ship was carrying.

The storm knocked out power to some 30,000 people in southern and central Sweden and disrupted train, road and ferry traffic in parts of Scandinavia. All bus lines in the Swedish capital, Stockholm, were canceled Wednesday evening because the glacial storm were considered unsafe.

"It's a complete standstill every-where, we've got accidents and cars with summer tires that can't cope," said police spokesperson Ulf Anderson. AP, AFP



New nursing grads get jobs in US, UAE, UK, Australia

By Christine V. Bagayaua

AFTER MONTHS OF DELAY, INDEED OF the look-tainted June 2006 nursing licensure exams are beginning to sweet out.

Some 15,000 have already taken their professional oath, and more are expected in regard to the Professional Regulation Commission office to do the same after the Court of Appeals ruled that successful examinees who were not allowed by the regional test bank in Manila and Baguio City may graduate and get their licenses to practice.

Among 20 new names mentioned by the Professional Regulation Commission's Board of Nursing (BON), at least four of them had already passed the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and are set to join four companions now employed in hospitals in the United States.

Yet, more June passers are working in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, while others have been hired in Australia and the United Kingdom, according to Antonio Octaviano, who resigned as BON chair together with four other board members in the aftermath of the nursing exam scandal.

"We're happy that they have moved on," Octaviano told reporters yesterday.

The newly appointed BON chair, Carmencita Abaquin, and acting members Leonila Bate, Beverly Merritt, Belle Go and Marco Antonio Sto. Tomas are set to take their oath and officially replace Octaviano's ousted colleagues Tuesday.

The BON is directly responsible for preparing the June questions for the twice-yearly board exams. Two members of the outgoing board, Arsenio Hosaka and Virginia Mabaya, are facing criminal and administrative charges for the alleged leak that caused the latest uproar of thousands of nursing school graduates-cum-retread hinks.

The scandal has cast months of uncertainty as officials flip-flopped on whether the examinees should retake the exam. Recriminations among nursing student organizations and government officials erupted. Finally, the Court of Appeals decided on a "selective retake" meaning only those examinees in the areas and categories where the leak reportedly occurred.

Octaviano is aware that the controversy is far from over. The scandal cost a shadow over all batch 2006 nurses.

On her own, she said she had tried to calm worried new nurses by telling them, "You are the only ones who can prove your critics wrong. Prove to them and to yourself that you are competent nurses."

The new nurses, she added, still had to pass more examinations given by individual hospitals for local employment and qualifying exams for foreign employment.

Meanwhile, a militant health workers' group said yesterday that the recent revamp in the Board of Nursing could only result to "cosmetic" changes in the nursing scene.

In a statement to media, the Health Alliance for Democracy (HEAD) said full officials of the Professional Regulation Commission and the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) should also have been replaced.

The replacement of the BON members was just a "band-aid solution to urgent and deeply rooted problems" plaguing the health education sector, Dr. Gene Nisperos, HEAD secretary general said.

"The PRC officials did not resign when it was the right thing to do, and they are still not resigning even if it is the necessary thing to do. The integrity of the examinations cannot be upheld or protected by those who do not seem to have a grasp of what integrity means," said Nisperos.

Also, he said CHED officials led by chair Carlito Puno could not "be expected to uphold the highest standards of academic freedom, if their overarching consideration is supplying the market demands for nurses abroad."

He said the leakage issue dragged on for several months because of the "mismanagement" of the Arroyo government and the failure of government accountability has not yet been enacted. With reports from

Aplus METRO
Cebu Editor G. Dipasupil
Tell us you feelings: Inquirer.net/comment/aplus/message to 2332 (Globe/Isa 282 (Smart)) E-mail: p_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Edsa undergoes repair until Dec.

Expect weekends of heavy traffic

By Jocelyn R. Uy

MOTORISTS SHOULD EXPECT HEAVY TRAFFIC every weekend on Edsa until December, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority said yesterday.

The MMDA had been repairing portions of the major thoroughfare for three weekends now. The work is expected to continue until the first week of December, said MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios.

"We wanted the repairs finished by Nov. 15. We can't let the work extend until December because traffic by then would be unbearable for motorists," Vergel de Dios added.

He said the rubbishing of the concrete road would take place every weekend, from 10 p.m. Friday until 6 a.m. Monday.

The road improvement project began on Dec. 6, on the Commercial and New York Streets portion of Edsa in Cubao, Quezon City and in Guadalupe, Makati City.

Vergel de Dios advised the public earlier to either avoid Edsa or stay home on weekends to help ease up traffic along the thoroughfare.

Rene Ertigona, an engineer at the MMDA Planning Office, said that motorists should avoid the following areas from 7 p.m. tomorrow: The northbound lane of the Quezon Avenue flyover, Roosevelt flyover and portions of Guadalupe and the southbound lane of the Gil Puyat-Ayala flyover and Southbound Avenue in Magallanes, near the MRT station, to Guadalupe Bridge.

Northbound motorists are advised to take Kalayaan Avenue going to C-5 Road instead of Edsa-Guadalupe.

Those headed south could take the secondary streets.

"We will route them (Edsa) areas to motorists at 10 p.m. tomorrow," Ertigona said.

RIVER BOUNTY An enterprising man sells his catch to passing motorists on the foot of Ayala Bridge in Manila. Fishermen said the fish, called bruslot, found by way on the Pasig River when the Marikina River levee was destroyed by the recent typhoons. Ariel Lucero

Court orders MMDA to suspend shed dismantling

By DJ Yap

A QUEZON CITY COURT ISSUED yesterday a temporary restraining order (TRO) preventing the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) from dismantling waiting sheds maintained by bus companies.

Judge Henri Jean-Paul Inting of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 95 granted the petition of High Desert Philippines Inc. and Gilt Beauty Stop-Over Inc. to stop the MMDA from demanding their waiting stations and advertising materials.

Inting issued a 20-day TRO to preserve the rights of the two companies while the court looked into their petition for preliminary injunction, accepting in cash of court Jennifer Abrina.

The petition will be heard Nov. 9, Monica said. He added that the court ordered the petitioners to post a P1 million bond to cover any damage that the respondents might suffer as a result of the TRO.

The civil case stemmed from a separate order by MMDA Chief Bayani Fernando to dismantle advertisements displayed on sheds operated by the companies.

According to the complaint, the two companies entered into agreements with MMDA and its predecessor, the Metro Manila Authority, to build, operate and maintain passenger stations and to ad materials would be displayed on the sheds.

Deadline

But, in a letter dated Aug. 6, Fernando terminated the agreements and ordered the companies to remove all their waiting sheds and ads on or before Sept. 15.

In a Sept. 13 meeting, representatives of the companies pleaded with the MMDA not to demolish their waiting sheds, and asked for an amicable solution of the problem.

Fernando reportedly agreed to defer "indefinitely" the demolition until a settlement was reached.

But the MMDA demolished about 18 waiting sheds from Oct. 13 to 18 without notice, the companies alleged. They said they also had to demolish four of their waiting sheds in connection with the construction of subways and underpasses in the Ayala Avenue-Edsa area.

Inting, earlier than June 6 in the hands of MMDA personnel.

In a separate complaint, the companies charged two MMDA officials with stealing electric cables and electric inside 15 of their waiting sheds along Edsa.

Pasay families find their dreams not that impossible

By Pablo A. Tariman

A PASAY City resident receives a certificate of participation during the ceremony marking the start of the construction of the St. Hannibal housing project's second phase. A total of 144 families living along the creek in four depressed barangays of the city will soon move to new homes away from the squalor of their old environment.

Families of Metalocs' labor union and Sheriffs Gadapan, who remain missing until now, insisted yesterday, All Souls' Day, with families of other desaparecidos at the Bulacan Church in Barangay Guiguinto.

Irlinda Gadapan, Sheriff's mother, and Oscar Hispeño, Karen's father, also lighted candles at the flattening by tiga Lo-calonso, a tortured victim of extrajudicial to victims of involuntary disappearance, as they prayed for the return of their daughters.

Mothers of some 20 other families gathered at the monument, where the names of people who disappeared without a trace since 1977 were carved on marble slates.

"My intuition tells me my daughter is alive. But everyday I am haunted by thoughts of what the military could be doing to her," the sixth-spoken Irlinda told the hundreds gathered.

Oscar said their daughters, if still alive, could be undergoing torture, brainwashing or even rape.

Karen, 23, and Sheriye, 29, both former students of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, were reportedly abducted by armed men wearing bonnets at 2 a.m. on June 26 or days before the UP Diliman campus.

A male companion, Manuel Merino, was also allegedly abducted. Military groups blamed the military for the incident.

The mothers' parents lamented the slow pace of the investigation being conducted by the commission chaired by retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo.

The relatives of the two UP students yesterday pleaded with the military to release their daughters and the appropriate charges if they violated any law.

The young women were among 196 people who have gone missing from January 2001 to October this year, according to the human rights group Karapatan.

The families of Merino of involuntary disappearance (ORO) said 17 disappearances were recorded in the first nine months of this year.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo doesn't listen to the people, not her officials," said Undine Perez, a relative.

Perez' husband, Tomas, a landowner expert, was abducted supposedly also by former security agency boss Antonio Ebdane in Samal, Bataan.

Families mourn 'desaparecidos' on All Souls' Day

By Jocelyn R. Uy

PARENTS OF KAREN EMPEÑO and Sheriye Gadapan, who remain missing until now, insisted yesterday, All Souls' Day, with families of other desaparecidos at the Bulacan Church in Barangay Guiguinto.

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MEMBERS of the Sound of Music cast: Seated (from left), singer Pinky Marquez and Dr. Pilar Gonzalez. Standing (from left): CHSA board members Marilen Espiritu and Ron Gregorio, with actors Joy Pérez, Miguel Tanchanco and Michael Williams.

Tribute to CHS's outstanding music makers set Nov. 11

THE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (CHS) Alumnae Foundation will promote the opening night of Repertory Philippines' production of "The Sound of Music" on Nov. 11 to honor alumnae whose lives are inextricably linked to music.

They will be introduced to an audience of music lovers shortly before the 8 p.m. show at the Repertory Philippines' theater in Onanga, Greenbelt 1, Makati City. The event is a fund-raising project for the foundation's scholarship program.

Formerly Holy Ghost College, CHS on Mendiola, Manila, has produced young women honed in the fine art of music who have moved on to diverse fields. But their love for music is alive and kicking.

The actors Carmen "Broadway" Dayrit-Padilla (HS 1964) and Amelita Dayrit Guevara (HS 53) have traveled the world as concert pianists. Mendiola's accomplishments include the successful lobbying for the law that created the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Gawad Mabuhay award.

Amelita is a holder of a master's degree in music from Ohio State University. Amelita "Susie" Cruz-Nicolas (Class 61), a long-time piano student at CHS, studied economics at New York, pursued a career in investment banking, and eventually shifted to an entrepreneurial universe including the now world famous Nanoy line of luxury lingerie.

Edith Tolentino (Class 51) is a successful song composer and writer whose work, "Sorry (Di Sinasadya)," is the first collaboration of Sitti Misi night with a Filipino lyricist.

Herminia "Minnie" Gualberto Al-cazaren (Class '47) is proud to be known as the mother of top recording artist Ogie Alcasid. As does, Katherine Mateo (Class '65) was a soprano and pianist and organ player; at 21, she played Rachmaninoff in a graduation recital with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

Elfinda Fule taught music at CHS from 1956 to 1962. Until 2002, she was the dean of the University of Santo Tomas Conservatory of Music and a member of the Cultural Center of the Philippines' board of trustees.

Other musically inclined CHS alumnae: Lourdes Reyes (LIS '58, BM '72) of the Mendiola, and Rosario Hernandez (BS '49, BM '58), Concordia Rasos (BS '49) and Elyssa Jingco-Alejandro (BS '76), the members of concert pianist Cecile Licad, performer Marite Herrera and singer Rachel Alejandro, respectively.

METROBRIEFS

Caloocan kids under watch

Off Kids 5 of their over-four-days hospitalization for measles in Caloocan City where a 4-year-old Erika Fabro allegedly died of measles complications, the Department of Health said he considered as the victim's deaths were the causes of her death. Erika's sister brother reportedly died five days earlier when her three siblings and cousins other children were hospitalized. Officials Metro Manila hospitals for frequent vomiting and persistent stomach ache. All the victims were neighbors at 31 Brendal St., Barangay 188. Take to Caloocan City Dr. Edgardo Jacildone, hospital director, said preliminary diagnosis of the three children was acute observation at the hospital said they had experienced frequent vomiting. Health personnel from the National Capital Region center conducted rectal swabs on other affected children added that the symptoms showed a possible diarrhea outbreak. Neighbors, on the other hand, said the victims could have eaten stored raw food that was not refrigerated, and that this might have caused the vomiting spells.

Nancy C. Carvajal

An award this time

A FOOD company in Caloocan City that was shut down by the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) last year was recently cited for environmental compliance by the same agency. ICM Food Products spokesperson Narcisa Mallari said the firm was awarded a certificate of recognition by the LLDA for complying its P6-million wastewater treatment facility. In its memorandum, Mallari added that LLDA general manager Casimiro Ynares cited ICM for being "aware of the need to protect the environment" and the "active role it is taking in the conservation of Laguna Lake." The award was presented at the recent Lakefair to promote the annual Lakefair Festival in Binan City. ICM, manufacturer of the corn snack, Sky Flakes, was ordered shut by the LLDA in April after its facilities were found to be sources of waste contamination. Earning the recognition only set the agency for the reopening of the food factory was the implementation of an aeration/filtration program calling for the construction of a wastewater treatment facility.

Nancy C. Carvajal

WARM AUTUMN IN NEW YORK
A woman takes advantage of above normal temperatures Nov. 1 as she strolls down the Mall in New York City's Central Park beneath the changing fall colors of a stand of American elm trees.

Thaksin in China, may reenter politics

BANGKOK—DEPOSED THAI PRIME MINISTER Thaksin Shinawatra, now in Beijing, said return home after martial law is lifted and may reenter politics under a planned new constitution, his lawyer said on Thursday.

Noppadon Pattama said the ousted billionaire telecoms tycoon had flown to China from London, where he has been since the Sept. 19 coup, to "rest and meet friends" and had no immediate plans to return to his homeland.

"He will return to Thailand when it is the right time, when martial law is lifted," Noppadon, a British-educated lawyer, told reporters. "He will consider returning to politics when the constitution is written up," Interior on Thursday, coup leader and army chief Sonthi Boonyaratglin, who has made clear Thaksin would not be welcome in Thailand any time soon, said the ease of his return would be in the hands of the interim, army-appointed government.

"If he wants to come back to Thailand he has to contact the government, not the Council for National Security," Sonthi said.

Thailand remains under martial law although there are few signs of the Council for National Security—the body formed by the coup leaders who retain the power to fire the government—enforcing bans on political gatherings and criticism reporting.

The government has said many times it will lift martial law "as soon as possible." But media said this week that Thaksin planned to exert his influence, Surayud Chulanont, as a Southeast Asian leaders meeting in China, although Surayud and Chinese officials denied the reports.

Since booting out Thaksin in Thailand's 18th coup in 74 years of on-off democracy, South has admitted that the generals are struggling to come up with solid evidence to back up their claims of "rampant corruption" under his administration.

Reuters

War closer in Somalia as gov't-Islamists peace talks postponed

KISMAYU—A SOMALI MINister said on Wednesday war in the country appeared likely and talks between the government and Islamic militias were postponed while both sides urging the Horn of Africa nation's rivals to exercise restraint.

After both sides failed to meet face-to-face in three days of Arab League-sponsored discussions in Sudan, the islamists called for a delay and an international fact-finding mission to be sent to the chaotic country to resolve "fundamental issues." Mediators including the Arab League, European Union and African Union said in a statement that more consultations was needed and urged both parties to exercise full restraint.

The International community was committed "to continue in giving (them) to succeeding their talks in Khartoum as soon as possible upon consultation with all the parties," it said.

"The parties are urged to exercise full restraint and commit themselves to previous agreements," including ceasing military and media campaigns and respecting principles of peaceful coexistence and non-interference in others' internal affairs.

The government's foreign minister, Ismail Hoore Buba, had earlier denounced the Islamists as no longer partners for peace.

"I think it's more likely that's not ... that is a miscalculation than maybe the Islamists are making," he told Reuters in London when asked whether war was likely.

"There are people who want the arms to explode," he added, referring to the Islamists. "I'm sure that the Somali people will join together to oust that kind of manifesto." The head of the Arab League delegation, Samir Hosni, said a new timetable for talks would be announced in "a week or less."

Reuters

IEA to call for more nuclear power plants–FT

LONDON—THE INTERNATIONAL ENERGY Agency (IEA) will for the first time in its 32-year history call on governments next week to help accelerate the construction of new nuclear power plants, the Financial Times reported on Thursday.

The move is part of a push for cheaper, cleaner and safer energy worldwide, the newspaper said.

"We need 1-decision almost tomorrow if we are going to ameliorate or reduce a point of uncertainty in climate and security of supply," IEA chief economist Fatih Birol told the newspaper.

Governments had to convince the public that nuclear power was safe and necessary, Birol said in an interview. They also had to create the right conditions for investors.

The FT said the IAE report would argue that nuclear power was an "essential tool" for ensuring energy security and climate change goals.

Birol said the $17,000 billion the agency calculated the world needed to invest in energy until 2030 had risen because of cost inflation and would be evolved upwards.

In its report, the IAE explored whether energy companies were investing in building capacity or merely to cover higher costs, the newspaper said.

Birol said the goal was to "prepare an alternative path ... to a cleaner, safer, less costly system."

Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

Kerry apologizes for remark about troops

KERRY

WASHINGTON—Rejected of damaging his own party or each week's congressional elections, Democratic Senator Kerry apologized to "any service member, family member or friend" he remarks drawn by Republicans and Democrats alike to be insulting to US troops in Iraq. He says intended to criticize President George W. Bush's administration, the 2004 Democratic presidential nominee said he mistakenly signalled that his words were "misinterpreted to imply anything negative about those in uniform." Kerry did not mention by which he told a group of California students two days ago that troublemakers who do not study hard and do their homework could likely "get stuck in Iraq." Aides said the senator had mistakenly dropped two words from his prepared remarks, which were originally written to say "you could say getting us stuck in Iraq."

AFP

Guatemala, Venezuela withdraw from UN seat

UNITED NATIONS—Guatemala and Venezuela on Wednesday agreed to withdraw from their deadlocked contest to secure a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council to make way for Panama, Ecuador's UN ambassador announced. Ambassador Diego Cardenas made the announcement to reporters after two rounds of talks between Guatemalan envoy Mynor Carl Rosenthal and his Venezuelan counterpart Nicolas Maduro at Ecuador's United Nations mission. Guatemala, backed by the United States, has won all but one rounds of voting in the 191-member General Assembly over the past three weeks for the coveted seat being vacated by Argentina on Dec. 31. Brazil has failed to obtain the required two-thirds majority needed to win one of the two rotating council seats for Latin America.

AFP

Ivory Coast transition

GBAGBO

ABIDJAN—The UN Security Council on Wednesday voted unanimously to give Ivorian President Charles Konan Banny sweeping powers to lead a one-year transition to new polls in the divided coastal African country. Paris's UN envoy Jean-Marc Ayrault, the president of the Council for November, announced that all 15 members backed a French-drafted resolution that also endorsed a decision by the African Union to keep Konan Banny and former President Laurent Gbagbo in their respective posts for "a new and final transition period not exceeding 12 months."

AFP

Wearing minis no longer a crime in South Korea

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREAN "MAHEON POlice," who patrolled the streets in the 1970s measuring the length of women's skirts, will soon officially be consigned to oblivion.

Showing too much skin in public places will no longer be classed as indecent exposure and will be deleted from the Minor Offenses Act, the National Police Agency has said.

The provision has not been enforced for years, and a police agency spokesperson quoted by Thursday's Korea Times said it was one of several out-of-date rules which would be abolished.

Also among the rules set to be scrapped are mainmanagement of chimney sweeping and older ordinge of pawnshop hours.

The miniskirt rule dates back to the military dictatorship of the 1970s, when long-haired men could also be stopped in the street and forced to undergo an instant haircut.

South Korea became a democracy in 1987 and most of the authoritarian restrictions under the minor offenses act have been scrapped since then, in keeping with the climate, a majority of the offenses under the act still are covered resulting in prohibited places.

AFP

The WORLD

Lilia Lorenzo B. Dizon

Nokor faces hardline front in nuclear talks

TOKYO—THE US AND JAPAN PLAN A HARDLINE against North Korea's nuclear programs in upcoming six-way talks, demanding Pyongyang immediately halt its nuclear tests and announce a schedule for disarming, a news report said Thursday.

The two allies also will push for North Korea to clarify a means of verification as outsiders ask me whether the nuclear, missile country is following through with disarmament promises, the Yomiuri newspaper said, citing unidentified government sources.

The solidified best camera day of ex North Korea until it would return to nuclear disarmament talks in an effort to get action in frozen overseas bank accounts, a vital source of hard currency for the impoverished and isolated communist nation.

The nuclear talks—which include China, Japan, Russia, the United States and the two Koreas—reached an agreement in September 2005 when the North pledged to abandon its nuclear program in exchange for aid and security guarantees, but there was little progress toward implementing the accord. Tensions only worsened last month when North Korea tested its first nuclear explosion.

The US had previously maintained that financial restrictions it has placed on North Korea are unrelated to the nuclear talks. But the United States said Wednesday it would agree to take up the matter in the revived arms negotiations.

During upcoming talks, Tokyo and Washington want North Korea to make stronger commitments "because North Korea has made the situation more serious compared with the surrounding previous talks," Yomiuri cited an unidentified foreign Ministry official as saying about Pyongyang's Oct. 9 nuclear test, which drew widespread international condemnation.

The two allies will demand that Pyongyang halt future nuclear tests, scrap nuclear-related materials, return to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and accept inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Yomiuri said.

AP

Sanctions hurting

TOKYO—MANY FOREIGN LEADERS are feeling the pinch after a year of US financial sanctions as well as recent international pressure steps imposed after its nuclear test, but whether they'll lose their grip on power is impossible to predict, a top Japanese intelligence official said.

Washington announced steps to restrict North Korean access to global financial networks just days after Pyongyang said five other parties to multilateral talks resulted a broad agreement on Sept. 19, 2005, aimed at ending Pyongyang's nuclear programs.

"I believe they (US financial sanctions) are having a considerable effect on North Korea's economy," said Tokuichi Shimizu, director general of the Japanese government's Public Security Intelligence Agency.

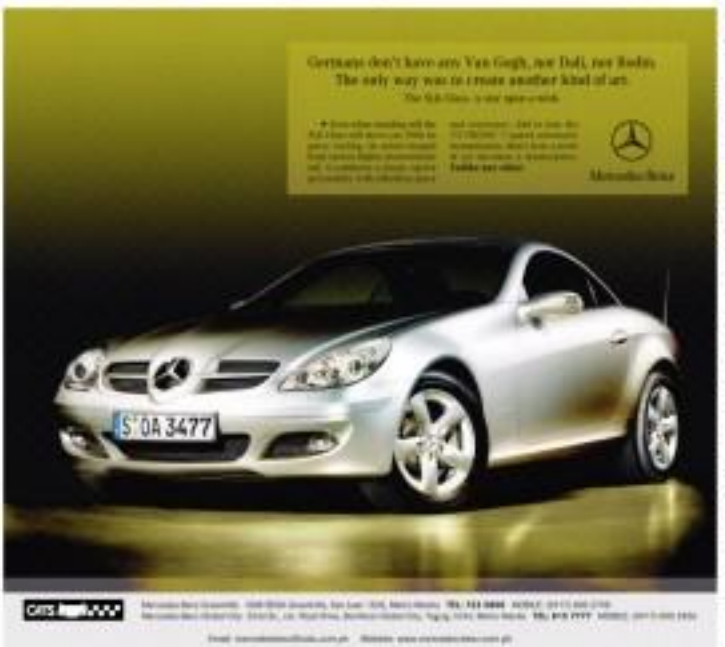
"The flow of funds into North Korea has been blocked on a great extent," Shimizu told Reuters in an interview.

Reuters

THE PRINCE AND I

Brunei's Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah Bolkiah, left, and his wife Princess Sarah Salleh arrive for their Royal wedding banquet at the Palace in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, in a Sept. 18, 2004 photo.

AP



Australia to push for 'New Kyoto'

CANBERRA—AFTER REPEATEDLY RULEING domestic carbon trading, Australia said on Thursday it would now push in Asia with emissions trading to combat global warming as part of a planned "new Kyoto" pact.

The vote-around by Australia, which refuses to sign the Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gases, comes as an opinion poll showed most Australians believe the government should sign Kyoto.

Environment Minister Ian Campbell said Australia wanted to forge a "New Kyoto" out of a six-nation alliance of the world's biggest polluters—China, India, the United States, Australia, South Korea and Japan.

"Starting within our region is a good place to start," Campbell said, adding an Asia-wide scheme would be a stepping stone to a more protracted global carbon trading framework.

"A very clear vision for Australia being part of a conversation post Kyoto, beyond Kyoto, framework, to something that we do need to get everybody in," Campbell told Australian Broadcasting Corp. radio.

Webster Warwick McMillan, a central bank board member, said a global carbon trade framework would never occur unless Australia and other developed nations took the lead.

"You need to start at the national level and move out from there," McMillan told the Australian Financial Review.

A British report on climate change this week warned of an environment-wrought global depression, unless action was taken now to combat global warming.

Using calculations in the British report, Australia imposed A$615 billion ($512 billion) worth of climate change every year in the form of coal exports totaling 222 million tonnes, or nearly a third of the world total.

A Newspoll done for environmental groups, including Greenpeace, showed 59 percent of Australians wanted their conservative government to sign Kyoto. Nine in 10 people wanted a shift from coal-fired power to renewable energy.

Australia, which has failed to ratify Kyoto, is already feeling the brunt of global warming with the worst drought in 100 years cutting into economic growth.

Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE
Hornets sting Celtics; Knicks win in 3 OTs /A26

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molendres

Barrera to fight 'Finale' winner

Mandatory defense: Pacquiao or Morales next for super feather champion

THE WORLD BOXING Council has ordered Mexican great Marco Antonio Barrera to face in a mandatory defense of his super featherweight title the winner of the Manny Pacquiao-Erik Morales fight on Nov. 18 in Las Vegas.

The decision was announced by WBC president Jose Sulaiman during the organization's 44th annual convention in Dubrovnik, Croatia, yesterday. The bid toward the approval of the third Pacquiao-Morales fight as the final elimination to decide Barrera's mandatory foe.

According to the report from Fight news, in the event that neither Pacquiao nor Morales is available to fight Barrera, third-ranked Humberto Soto of Mexico will be the next official challenger.

There have been reports that Morales will move up in weight after the Nov. 18 fight, making a possible Pacquiao-Barrera rematch even more plausible.

Morales is actually ranked No. 1 in the lightweight (135-lb) division of the WBC.

PACQUIAO

BARRERA

MORALES

ratings starting Oct. 31 while Pacquiao, the reigning WBC International super featherweight (130-lb) titlist, is the top-ranked challenger in Barrera's corner.

A Pacquiao-Barrera clash is expected to become a megabuck fight since the Mexican has been angling for a rematch with the Filipino since losing by an 11th round stoppage in their clash in 2000.

Barrera tests the super featherweight title by decision over fellow Mexican Morales on Nov. 27, 2004.

Meanwhile, Filipino boxing writers Nic Villamor, who calls the shot for the undefeated Boy "Boom Boom" Bautista, yesterday expressed confidence that Pacquiao is well on his way to yet another entrancing victory over the twelve-time champion Morales.

Villamor reported from Los Angeles that Pacquiao is in terrific shape, and is training diligently for his third fight with Morales dubbed as the "Grand Finale."

"Gusto parang hindi napapagod sa training," the dean of sports writers in the country said. "Like doesn't want to stop during his training," Villamor said of Pacquiao.

Inform L. Lagumbay, Court Reporter

Bayron fires 71, trails leader by 1

HONG KONG (AFP) – Bayron with a one-under-par 71 to trail Taiwan's Hsieh Chi-chen by one stroke at the start of the Hong Kong Amateur Open at Discovery Bay Golf Club's Ruby and Diamond courses Wednesday.

Bayron, a rising star from Davao, bucked the strong winds and rough playing conditions at the up-and-down layout to be the only other under-par round.

Mike Akpandiw and Gene Sendez were within striking distance with identical 74s, along with seven others. They lay behind Arnold Issot of Australia, who carded a one-over 73 for third in the 72-hole championship.

For the rest of the 12-man HP delegation struggled, including Anthony Fernando, the top-ten among members of the national pool seen here by HCTSI, shot two 80.

Jhamel Hadia was the next best HP scorer after Bender and Akpandiw, carding a 77 for a share of 14th place while Eugene Bayot and Mhark Fernando scored in joint 29th with 79s.

Winslow fastest in practice; Sy, Peña not far behind

DETRO Hernando of REAY Team Indonesia spins out (right) of the wet track as Speedtech Asia's Gaby dela Merced and Arnar Racing's Bj Jackson drive past him.

RICHARD MIRANDA—DEDICATED Junior Wonders of Bengala Foundation take fastest time in practice Thursday but to finish in take title as an indication of things to come in the last four rounds of the Asian Karting Open series on Oct. weekend at the Baguio Karting Circuit here.

"The Cool's set up is very good," said Winslow after clocking one minute and 30.2 seconds in the morning session. "We really confident but we're all still trying to learn new things."

But clocking stood as the best over though he was in the last few minutes due to heavy rains as storm thundered the track wet and slippery.

Winslow's top opponents for the overall crown—Ali Ardoin of Ireland and Jimmy Sy of the Philippines—were

in the top five in both practice sessions although it was close they held back.

Ardoin's right hand, broken in a motorbike accident in Ireland last September, rattled after the morning session for the 17 year-old driver of Arnar Racing, scored in the series with 164 points, brushed it off, insisting "it's fine."

He clocked 1:30.9 in the morning but dipped to fifth four in the afternoon with a time of 1:34.0.

Sy of Speedtech Asia, who is in third, 43 points behind Winslow, said the time he spent behind the wheel of his older car that he will use for the races on Saturday and Sunday will come in handy.

"We tried some set up but this didn't click," said Sy 19, who revealed his new car in China but Ady "Gill, we're confident we can pull it off."

Series debutmaster Charles Billings of England, driving for Team Goddard, finished fourth where he submitted the fastest time of 1:33.1 in the afternoon.

Eight Bike of Team Goddard may fourth fastest in the morning and your second best in the afternoon as he tried to get into the rhythm some weeks after figuring in a nasty accident in Indonesia that left him shaken.

"I'm really just getting into the rhythm again. We're trying now set-ups," he said.

Asia's other teammates—Michela Bonaparte and Mieng Lachit of Macau, both driving in the Promotion class—submitted relatively slow times also—fifteenth and thirteenth respectively. Gaby dela Merced and Philip Svensson of Sweden.

Andam trips Aoki as 21 RP bets gain World Pool slots

LEONARDO ANDAM SAVED HIS BEST FOR LAST AND SILVIO Japan's Ryuji Aoki, 9-4, Wednesday night to become the 21st Filipino in the main draw of the World Pool Championship starting tomorrow at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

Visiting nephrologist to no 3 on Japan bested Ao to preadmission 13 pushed for the win because that was my last chance," said Andam, who wins five gold medals at the 2005 Manila Southeast Asian Games.

On the way to the finals, the pride of Cavi, Santa City topped Benito Tonaza (7-2), Daniel Uma (7-1), Rhenalyn Tandoyo (7-5), Nestor Sedillo (7-2) and Hsiang Chung-Jesse (7-3), respectively to arrange a rubber showdown with Ryuji. For topping the qualifying session, Andam pocketed $500 (P40,000).

Filipino duo seniors who damned sidelined upon via the point system were Jhonnie Wilo, Rudy Morris and Israel Sana. They padded the number of Filipinos to the 128-mode draw to 22, exceeding the previous high of 19 set by the Taiwanese last year in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

The other Filipino qualifiers were Roberto Gomez, Lee Vann Corteza, Eduardo Villanueva and Antonio Lining.

Seeded in the main draw were former champion Efren "Bata" Reyes (1999) and Alex Pagulayan (2004), pool legend Jose "Nitong" Parica, former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante, last year's semifinalist Rubilen Amit, Dennis Orcollo, Rodolfo Luat, Ramil Gallego, Gandy Ablo, Renato Alunan, Jeffrey De Luna, Roland Garcia and Junior Jumilapan, a replacement of the ailing Antonio Manuel Gabica.

The Taiwanese and the Japanese also made their presence felt in the last day of the qualifying round at the Star Billiards Center in Cuao Village, Quezon City.

Chen Chin-Jan topped the list of solid-cue cuemen to become the fourth qualifier from Taiwan, while Tomoo Takano of Japan got the lone set of Elvis Parra, 9-6, in the final of the cue-ing session in advance to the tournament proper.

"If the qualifiers are a preview of what's to come, we will have a great world championship," said Toe Matsuhara, president of Star Sports, the local WPC organizer.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

BUSTAMANTE (left) and Bayo Ilusi Ramon Ang, president of San Miguel Corp. which threw its all-support for the World Pool Championship and the Filipino bet.

San Miguel backs local bets

THE COUNTRY'S BOXING OF THE WORLD Pool Championship starting tomorrow got a big boost as San Miguel Corp. (SMC) sponsorship announced its sponsorship of the prestigious competition featuring the world's top billiard players.

A generous backer of Filipino sports heroes, the company also declared full support to all 39 entries who will pit their skills against the world's finest players in the weeklong event that dangles $100,000 for the champion.

Billards icons Efren "Bata" Reyes and Francisco "Django" Bustamante former the Philippine challenge in the tournament which opens tomorrow at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Pasay City.

Reyes and Bustamante automatically earned berths in the world championship after finishing in the top 32 of the season-hopping the Migrol Asia Pool Tour this year.

"We thank SMC for its support," said Reyes. "We're happy to be playing together, and we hope Filipinos will cheer for the championship."

SBC-Ateneo duel kicks off H'grown Cup

AN EXCITING THREE-GAME BILL STARTING with a San Beda-Ateneo duel will kick off the FIBA-Puma 4 Homegrown International Cup which will tip it tomorrow at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

Tournament organizers reveals Manny V. Pangilinan, an alumnus of both San Beda and Ateneo, has been invited to be the guest speaker during the opening ceremony at 1 p.m.

The Red Lions take on the Blue Eagles at 2 p.m., Letran battles contending La Salle at 3 p.m. and defending titlist Cebu defending UAAP champion faces Perpetual next.

"We're all set," said league commissioner Weigl Villaviciosa during yesterday's media conference at Casey's Grill in Libis, Quezon City. "They've been waiting back home."

Villaviciosa says Ateneo's Enrico Dandan, league chair, Jun Bukidnon, deputy commissioner Jesse Mamigo, Manila 23 vice president for marketing, and Paul Templonuevo, Pasig V-time) supervising officer.

Tickets for the games are available at all 888 Ticketnet outlets or at the Cuao box office.

Archers return to action

With the Green Archers making a return to the collegiate basketball scene, supporters by the competition has been tremendous.

"Bangalan Adams for the Ateneo La Salle game alone have already been sold out in advance," said Bradon.

"I don't think anything could go wrong in the tournament," said Mamigo who said Stadio 23 will stay committed to the project for years to come."

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A Filipino will win World Pool

CHANGLIN ARCHETTO: I HAVE NO DOUBT a Filipino will win the 2006 World Pool Championship at both Cuao Convention Center at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

Hometown hero Efren "Bata" Reyes, who won the world title in Cardiff, Wales, in 1999, former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante, 2005 champion Alex "The Lion" Pagulayan, Dennis Orcollo and Rubilen Amit should form a formidable cast of world-class players who will dispute the $100,000 first prize, the biggest winner's purse in any billiard history.

Many long experiences an unsolicited billiards of pool, I say the Filipinos have more than hold their own against their rivals from Europe, especially from Germany, the United States and other Asian neighbors, notably Taiwan.

Through the years, many of our players have conquered in many tough international tournaments and prevailed over many of the sport's best and brightest. Aside from this, they will get the added advantage of playing before the homestreet crowd.

I expect impressive performances from Reyes, now ranked the world's greatest pool player. On seven-ply Bustamante, the reigning Philippine Open champion, and Canada-based Pagulayan, who defeated Taiwanese Chang Pei-wei in the 2004 WPC finals at the World Trade Center in Taipei.

I'm also expecting more from the other international stalwarts like Orcollo, Dorado, Rustom Al-ones, Ramil Gallego, Gandy Ablo and the others. Filipino stock like Jeffrey de Luna, Roland Garcia and upstart Jose "Nitong" Parica, the 54-year-old US-based ace artist who was once considered the best Filipino cue-ist player before Reyes and Bustamante came along.

However, I'm not taking for granted the players from Taiwan, led by defending champion Wu Chia-ching, 2005 Asian Tour winner Ming-Chiang Chen and the cool and calculating Chao Fong-pang, the first Asian to win the WPC twice (in 1998 and 2000).

Despite their lackluster performance in recent months, Chinese Taipei cue masters are still a threat because of their vast reservoir of talents and their obsession to keep the WPC title in Taiwan.

The WPC is the world's biggest and most prestigious 9-ball pocket tournament. Organized by ESPN Star Sports, Mueller-Sport and local organizers Siena Sports headed by Toe Matsuhara, this year's WPC is sanctioned by the World Pool-Billiards Association, the sport's international governing body, and the local sports association, the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines headed by

CLEAN LIVING

Alexander A. Arroyo

Ernesto Pajarillo.

I also agree with the prediction of Philippine billiards godfather and noted sports patron Atanacio "Peachy" Arroyo, who said the Germans will be our biggest rivals. "Germany is a rising power in world pool. It has nine owners in this year's WPC led by former world champions Thorsten Schmatzer (2002), Ralph Souquet (1996) and Oliver Ortmann (1995). Thus, I expect good performances from Germany."

Also to reckon with is Thomas Engert, the reigning European 9-ball champion. "Engert is Germany's best today," said Souquet.

The European top money winner in 2006, Engert will battle some of Europe's top players in this year's WPC, including 2001 World Pool champion Mika Immonen of Finland, Marcus Chamat of Sweden and Tony Drago of Malta and a powerhouse delegation from the United States represented by US ranking, the biggest foreign contingent on the WPC roster.

The American campaign will be anchored by multi-titlist Earl Strickland, who won the WPC in 1990, 1993 and 2002. In the 2002 final, Strickland wound out a good-natured Bustamante, who almost abandoned the match after learning about the death of his seven-month-old daughter. Trailing all the way Strickland won, 11-11.

"I have a great player," said the flamboyant Strickland after the nail-biting match. "You just have to keep your composure playing against Bustamante, otherwise he will run you after."

The other Americans who have watching are last-time UNLV and PBPT-WPC champion Johnny Archer, a familiar face to Filipino billiards aficionados, and former US Open winner Rodney Morris of Hawaii. A consistent winner of many major tournaments for more than two decades, Archer is the most feared player in pocketed pool in the truth Efren Reyes. With his near-dizzy execution of a cue, Archer is in a class with the very best in the international pool circuit.

When he lifts to billiards legend, "Players such as Archer break consistently well. I hope he would be [in] best form coming [Christmas] tasks together against Bustamante in a match in Los Angeles and have a monumentally well-contested break shot?"

Torrid Giants battle Beermen; Air21-Coke up

SIZZLING-HOT PERformers and Jun Mag-ayad Bowl, sister teams **Alaska** have basically traced the same path to the first season of the fully-**%** Scot PBA Philippine Cup, pave-ways tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

Winners of their last three games after relinquishing scare, the Beermen and defending champion Chris-bow Giants slug it out in the 7:30 p.m. game with the winner claiming the tournament's tonight winning streak and creeping closer behind the leaders.

Struggling Air21 and Coca-Cola collide in the 4:45 p.m. match.

The Express, in eighth place with a 2-4 card, dunk with the Tigers (3-4) reason there so called "Energizer Bunny" after dinking away Ronald Tubid to Barangay Ginebra last week for a song.

Air21's cunning game is undoubtedly one of the best... if not the best... as the maneuverers and Tubid, who was swapped for three future Rookie Draft rights to the Gin Kings, was easily a great contributor to that craze.

Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio expect the Giants to be fully recharged following their outing who dealer before the brief Halloween break.

The Giants played three games in a seven-day span last week, win-ul theris a classic triple-overtime thriller over Talk N Text that was mind-wished by nine-men Sta. Lucia and Coca-Cola.

"Certainly it (rest) was good for the players," Gregorio said.

The Beermen also welcomed the short respite with two key players still not in game shape and two recent additions still in fully blend with their new teammates.

Danny Ildefonso was sent back to controversy after sitting out the first five games, Danny Seigle is returning twelve Cheshire, and Love acquisitions Bong and Alibhasil and lordy Ingkade found more time to work out with the lineup. Mourvey Castillo

STANDINGS	W	L
Sta. Lucia	5	1
Ginebra	5	2
Red Bull	4	2
Talk 'N Text	4	2
Purefoods	4	3
San Miguel	3	3
Coca-Cola	3	4
Air21	2	4
Alaska	2	4
Shell	1	5
Welcoat	1	5
Alaska	1	6

TODAY'S GAMES
(At Araneta Coliseum)
4:45 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Air21
7:30 p.m.—San Miguel vs Purefoods

Santos nails nat'l clay title

FOOTBOOT JOSEF GAMES silver medalist Jr Ariel Santos downed 146 targets to emerge as 2006 sporting clays national champion in the event two-day shooting Clays competition at the Metro Gun Club shooting range in Hilltop Taytay, Rizal.

Dr Santos' winning tally came on the second day after Mike de Guzman and Olympian and IDA Games veteran Joey Bahlo had carded 143 and 141 out of 200 targets, respectively.

Dr Guzman also topped the Masters and 20 gauge classes.

"This wasn't championship but is another huge success for clay shooting," said actor Richard Gomez, president of the Sporting Clays Association of the Philippines.

The complete results:

Masters—Mike de Guzman, 143; Joey Bahlo, 141; Nonoy Hernandez, 138; Ernesto Ysasaga, 138; Jun Ignacio, 128.

Junior—Jan-Erik Apolito, 132; Jose San Jose, 130; Jose Santos, 114; Rhenz Ochoa, 95; Gabriel Garcia, 114.

Children's—Jay Villaruegas, 138; Jerry Jacob, 131; Mitch Agustino, 102; Gian Dans, 102; 102.

Seniors—Carlo Rodolfo, 137; Ramon Po, 103; Gen Panes, 127; Jay Tandy, 101; Luis de, 103.

Veterans—Tony Cano, 116; Jesse de Castro, 111; Ed Carmel, 78; Marino Bautista, 74; Manolong Valdez, 68.

Ladies—Ari Jara, 124; Anh de Guzman, 122.

20 Gauge—JR de Guzman, 142; Jay Valdez, 141; Luis Bautista, 122; Jhesse Tapayo, 120; Jose San Juan, 120.

SAN MATEO blasts away en route to the championship.

Kaya, Air Force booters score

KAYA METROPOLITAN EAST EDITION (FC) LATE surge to eke out a 2-1 win last weekend in the Tony Simon Cup Filipina football tournament at the Ateneo football grounds in Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Former national player Freddie Gonzales scored in the 45th minute before Paul Tolentino hammered home the pro-second goal in the 86th.

But striker Christine Hamagsa (pic 002) on the scoreboard and the Tamaraws (1-2) relentlessly pressed forward until the final whistle.

The win was the second straight for Kaya which kept second spot in Group B in the event organized and sanctioned by the Northern Capital Region Football Association.

In other matches, Group B encounter Army came from behind to rip upset-conscious Union FC, 2-1, for its third win in a row; Air Force subdued Navy, 2-0, on Jhett Bernabe's two markers for its third win in as many outings in Group A; and Pasargad booked its first win in two games by routing Lions FC, 5-1.

Blu Boys, Japan blast rivals

EITA-KYUSHU, JAPAN—FLORANTE ACUSA fanned a two-hitter in his outings as the Philippine Blu Boys whitewashed Malaysia, 7-0, yesterday at the start of the 8th Asian Men's Softball Championship here.

The RP Blu Boys clobbered Malaysia with 13 hits to pummel the event, which nevertheless failed to the 10-0 drubbing Japan pulled off in the expense of Thailand.

Hong Kong pounded over Singapore, 7-1.

The Blu Boys are heavily favored to also beat Hong Kong and Singapore in their group.

"The team did well in our first game and I hope the same kind of intensity will continue for the next few days," said Jesse Neri Cheillo, president of the Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines (Asphil).

Japan's young national team is expected to also breeze past Taiwan and Indonesia in its succeeding outings.

SLR golf wars shift to Alta Vista

CEBU—WITH EACH HOME IMPRESSIVE TRACK record at home, the other teams in the Sta. Lucia Golf Tour are all anticipating a homecoming-back by the Cebu club which is hosting the second leg of the series starting today.

Circuit leader Rancho Palos Verdes, which built an eight-point lead over Eagle Ridge after the opening leg it hosted in Davao last month, is wary of the Alta Vista course, which is undefeated at their home course since the Tour's inaugural edition seven years ago.

Palos Verdes collected 39 points by winning Group E and finishing second in two other divisions to sweet the lead in the competition among eight clubs fielding the Sta. Lucia Realty Sponsor.

Eagle Ridge, counting a victory in Group J, a third place finish in Group I and fifth place in Group 2, is not too far behind Palos Verdes with 31 points, 4 up on Alta Vista.

The two-newest teams in the Sta. Lucia Golf Tour Calamba-based Hermosa Red of Laguna, are tied for fourth in the overall rally with 20 points. Hermosa Tagaytay is sixth at 12, the Orchard has 10 points and Caliraya Springs is last with only a point.

SPORTSWATCH

Pasay derby kicks off today

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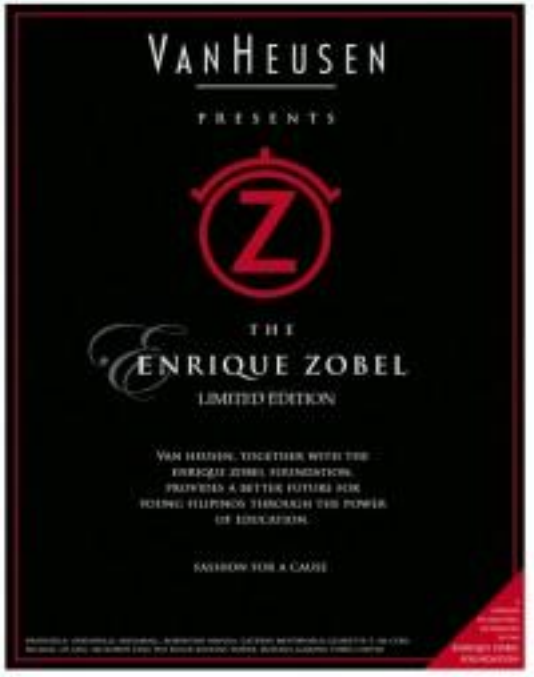

Hornets sting Celtics; Knicks win in 3 OTs

BOSTON—TEE PAUL HILL AUDRAGELA began Wednesday night with a commotion honoring the late Celtics owner—and a loss by the Boston team that has plummeted from the heady days of his leadership.

Despite scoring second-half comebacks, the Celtics couldn't overcome Mike Johnson point guard Chris Paul's 20 points and 10 assists—a free throw with 0.4 seconds left in the final two minutes—and the Hornets won, 91-87.

Antoine Walker, who had only all 56 previous Celtics owners sponsors, died Saturday of a heart attack near his Washington house at the age of 69. He had planned to attend.

The Hornets also added key components, picking up Southwest, Tyson Chandler and Bobby Jackson after finishing six games out of a playoff spot last season.

But Paul and Jamal Tinsley, who had 15 points, remain their leaders. It was Paul whose tip-in with 12 seconds remaining made it 91-85 and secured the victory.

Bucks 105, Pistons 97

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Michael Redd scored 37 points, Charlie Villanueva had 16 points and 12 rebounds in his Milwaukee debut, and the seven-foot Bucks got their season off to a much better start than Detroit, 105-97.

The Pistons were without Ben Wallace for the fifth time in seven games.

At Orlando, Florida, Dwight Howard had 27 points and 11 rebounds, and Jason Nelson scored 21 points as Orlando completed Chicago, 109-94, in a winner-season opener.

The Bulls beat the defending champions Miami Heat by 92 points the night before, but couldn't overcome media Wednesday.

At Philadelphia, Allen Iverson scored 32 points and Kyle Iguodala had 15 as host Philadelphia over Atlanta, 86-75.

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Jason Kidd had 14 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for his 79th career triple-double, Vince Carter added 25 points and 11 rebounds, and New Jersey beat Toronto, 102-88.

At Charlotte, North Carolina, teammates Chris and Tyrone Zeidler-Jones scored 20 points apiece and Jackson pulled away from Charlotte in the fourth quarter to win in season opener, 106-98.

Knicks 118, Grizzlies 117, 3 OT

At Memphis, Quentin Richardson hit two free throws with 12 seconds left in the third overtime and New York survived Memphis.

The Knicks built a 19-point lead in home opener Isiah Thomas' debut as coach, but blew it and needed three overtimes to finish off the Grizzlies.

At Minneapolis, Mike Bibby made an emerging return to Sacramento, then a costly one near the end.

Bibby picked up two personal fouls in a critical stretch of the fourth quarter and Minnesota's Kevin Garnett finished with 24 points and 12 rebounds to lift the Timberwolves over the Kings, 91-85. Bibby was expected to miss the first two weeks of the season with an injured thumb.

At Cleveland, Larry Hughes scored 27 points...

LOS Angeles Lakers' Lamar Odom (right) shoots past Golden State Warriors' Patrick O'Bryant (left) and Baron Davis in the second half in Oakland, Calif., Wednesday.

LeBron James added 26 and Cleveland opened a season its four-and players believe can end with an NBA championship by beating Washington, 97-94.

At 348 Salt City, Derek Fisher had 21 points and six assists in his 13th debut and led a three-on-one down the stretch as the Jazz beat Houston, 107-97.

At Seattle, Zach Randolph scored 35 points to help Portland rally past Seattle, 116-106, and spoil the 40th and potentially final season opener for Supersonics.

At Phoenix, Shawn Marion had 27 points and 10 rebounds, Steve Nash added 20 points and 11 assists, and Phoenix beat Los Angeles in its home opener, 113-104.

Amare Stoudemire, looking strong after starting seriously all of last season following knee surgery, had 15 points in 29 minutes.

At Oakland, California, Jimmy Yantil had career highs of 23 points and nine rebounds, Lamar Odom scored 22 points and Los Angeles beat Golden State, 116-98, for its second victory in two days without Kobe Bryant.

Odom added nine rebounds and nine assists, and Luke Walton scored 10 points as the Lakers followed up their surprising 114-108 victory over Phoenix on Tuesday night. AP

Win or Wrong

An All-Star game without the stars

ATLANTA—FOR 42, the title of a Mick Jagger hanging over a Tour Championship causing the US PGA Tour's new biggest stars. Some fit uncanding but conditions so he worked quickly on the practice green late Wednesday at tension.

But many were happier to be at East Lake for the season-ending event for the top 30 on the points list. He spended in three days ago by seeing par from 50 yards short of the 18th green, giving him one last chance to salvage his year with a victory.

And that's when the light came on. "At least I've got a chance," he said. "And it's a lot better when you only have to shoot 20 guys."

He doesn't have to beat Tiger Woods, the No. 1 player in the world who decided to end his Ford Tour season a month ago by skipping the chance to win a version of the All-Star game for the first time.

He doesn't have to worry about Phil Mickelson, who stuck to his strategy of calling it quits after the season. After missing a birdie

ERNIE ELS kicks out from the sand on the 18th hole during the PGA pro-am.

putt from inside 6 feet on the 72nd hole, he finished with a bogey for a 71 and tied for 27th place.

Woods, who had only all 56 previous Celtics owners sponsors, died Saturday of a heart attack near his Washington house at the age of 69. He had planned to attend.

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At Cleveland, Larry Hughes scored 27 points...

NY kids course shapes up

NEW YORK—CHILDREN AS YOUNG AS FIVE could soon be working on their swing and practicing their bunker shots in New York, set to hone what is being billed as the United States' first golf course for kids.

The public complex, complete with lessons, chipping area and practice bunker, is due to open for budding Tiger Woods types in Brooklyn later next year, the New York Daily News said.

The six-million-dollar club also features a nine-station driving range and a clubhouse with classrooms for 5-to-17-year-old members. The course will sit in a 4.5-hectare (11-acre) site, the New York Times added.

"The biggest payout for us is, we serve thousands of kids in getting them excited to golf," unidentified neighborhood kids who wouldn't otherwise play golf," the paper quoted Philip Craft from the City Parks Foundation, behind the project on saying. AFP

BUSINESS

Editor Raoul G. Marcelo ▲ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

Stock market hits new 9-yr high

Peso continues to rally, marks strongest close in 4½ years

IN THIS ISSUE

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■ **BSP keeps** policy rates unchanged/B2

■ **5 ports** in Visayas, Mindanao up for expansion/B5

■ **UBS doubts** RP will meet '07 deficit target/B8

By Elizabeth L. Gavilan and Doris C. Dumlao

THE STOCK MARKET YESTERDAY MARKED A NEW HIGH IN 9 years, while the peso likewise reached a fresh milestone in 4 1/2 years as investors continued to be bullish over the country's economic growth, analysts said.

The peso yesterday closed at 49.71 against the US dollar, gaining its strongest [illegible] against the dollar.

The peso yesterday hit an intra-day high of 49.70.

It has been six years since the market surged for 10 consecutive trading days, the Philippine Stock Exchange said. The last time it managed to do that was from June 28 to July 11, 2000.

Investors yesterday returned from a one-day holiday—which the Bar Association of the Philippines proposed as observe All Souls' Day—and easily managed to drive the market index 33.4 points up or 0.48 percent to 2,725.79. Despite the modest uptick, the index closed at its first finish since July 7, 1997 when it hit 2,733.32.

The index has been posting gains since Oct. 16, gaining a total of 298.3 points, or 7 percent, over the past 13 sessions, according to the PSE.

STOCKMARKET B2

Public sector registers surplus of ₱13.39B in first half

By Michelle V. Basco

THE FISCAL POSITION OF THE country's public sector hit a surplus of ₱13.39 billion in the first half of the year—a stark turnaround from the ₱45.2 billion deficit it registered in the same period a year ago.

The consolidated public sector fiscal position (CPSF) is the combined surpluses and deficits of the national government, local government units (LGUs) and state-owned firms.

The last time the Philippines recorded a full-year surplus in its CPSF was in 1976 at ₱2.27 billion.

The CPSF had consistently been on the red since 1997, when the deficit generated by ₱13.617 billion. The deficit had since increased year-on-year until it reached ₱225.46 billion in 2004. A drop, however, was first recorded last year, when the deficit fell to only ₱67.3 billion, following the national government's implementation of several revenue-enhancement measures.

The government would have to sustain it for the second half what it did in the first half if it hopes to record its first full-year surplus in 10 years. But according to an official, that is not likely to happen this year.

The fiscal position for the first half may not hold through to the second half," said Teresa Lubiano, NEP director for policy and planning.

That is because the national government intends to increase spending in the remaining months of the year following the passage by Congress of the FY[illegible] appropriations.

PUBLIC B2

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BSP overnight rates unchanged

Monetary policy easing starts; tiering system adopted

By Doris C. Dantiao

THE MONETARY BOARD (MB) yesterday decided to keep the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' key policy rates unchanged for the 13th straight month.

The board, however, endorsed a tiering system on overnight money, which is seen as the first of a series of incremental policy easing measures supported by a favorable inflation outlook.

Under a tiering system, the BSP pays lower rates on overnight money placements in excess of certain threshold levels. This is to encourage banks to lend out instead of pushing all their funds with the central bank.

The system was implemented by the BSP from 2003 to 2004.

As the growth in domestic liquidity or M3 surged to 14.3 percent in September from 12.6 percent in August, the policy-making board kept the BSP's overnight borrowing rate (also known as BSP or reverse repurchase agreement) at 7.5 percent, and the lending rate (repurchase agreement) at 9.75 percent, and the lending rate (repurchase agreement) at 9.75 percent, which had been maintained since October last year.

"The MB notes the inflation outlook is improving. This provides flexibility but there are still risks to consider, including uncertainties in oil prices and the outcome of the 10 Nov (sic) poll," reportedly if it turns out to be more severe than expected," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a press briefing after the monthly monetary policy-setting meeting yesterday.

"While we're saying this (tiering) gives us flexibility, we're not saying we'll reduce interest rates right away," Tetangco said.

The market sentiment was that the rates would indeed be kept unchanged for this morning.

"I agree with the assessment. With inflation forecast to fall to 4-5 percent in 2007, the BSP's 7.5 percent overnight repo (BSP) is 200 basis points too high," ING Bank said in a commentary yesterday.

ING Bank had expected the introduction of the tiering system ahead of future rate cuts. It expects the first rate reduction in December.

Effective yesterday, the BSP said only the first P5 billion of overnight money placed with the BSP would earn the 7.5 percent published rate. The next P5 billion will yield 200 basis points less than the published rate and placements in excess of P10 billion will get 400 basis points less than the said rate.

Despite the continued growth in domestic liquidity, some of effective monetary easing brought about by the revival of the tiering system, the BSP expects a sustained downtrend in inflation.

Public sector . . .

From page B1

phenomenal budget, the DOF said.

Spending needs to grow in the second half to compensate for the slack in expenditures in the first half—a result of the postponement of the 2005 national budget.

Data from the DOF showed that the CISP in the first half was boosted by the continued surpluses of social security institutions, government financial institutions, local government units and the central bank. The CISP was pulled down by the deficit of the national government.

Social security institutions—which includes the Social Security System, the Government Service Insurance System, and PhilHealth—recorded a combined surplus of P106.03 billion. Their surplus exceeded the target of P19.46 billion, and was even higher than the P23.17 billion recorded in the first half of last year.

Combined surplus by local government units reached P38.42 billion compared with the P6.9 billion target and the P16.01 billion recorded a year ago.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas contributed a surplus of P13.26 billion. This was higher than the goal of P1.82 billion and higher than last year's P6.224 billion.

Gains from privatization of state-owned firms hit P421 million, while that from equities in government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) reached P7.91 billion.

The national government posted a deficit of P313.51 billion for the first half—better than the P90.273 billion target and lower than last year's P92.31 billion.

GOCCs' for its combined deficit of P20.709 billion, while payments for the debts of the old central bank reached P6.974 billion.

Government financial institutions—which includes the Land Bank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines—registered a surplus of P3.43 billion.

Stock market . . .

From page B1

Yesterday, gainers outnumbered losers 41 against 43, while value turnover totaling P1.98 billion.

"The market had a little level to see," said Edgar Baturael, head of research at AFX Kim Eng Securities Inc. "In the short term, the market is looking for a breather, after a lot of stocks have gone up."

Since the start of the year, the peso has appreciated by P3.08, or 6.4 percent, from the $1.00 level at end-2005.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said the strong influx of foreign portfolio investments, which lifted the local stock exchange index to a nine-year high, as well as remittances from overseas Filipino workers ahead of the Christmas season contributed to support the local currency.

Value traded at the spot foreign exchange market yesterday amounted to $264.6 million.

Rhenida Ayee, senior vice president for finance management at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. said that, aside from the OFW influence, strong demand for Philippine peso bills for months was keeping the peso strong against the US dollar.

"Although, come 2007, there will be a 10 percent capital take out on Treasury (government-denominated Philippine bonds), the demand from the offshore market is very strong, and hedge funds are gobbling up whatever is being sold by local banks," Ayee said.

He said the outlook for the peso was bullish over the medium to long term period.

"We have to live with a strong peso," Ayee said, "We have to live with a low interest rate environment."

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., the stock actively traded stock, jumped P20 to P3,500, accounting for about 39 percent of total turnover. It hit P3,585 earlier in the session, its highest level ever.

Philex Mining Corp. led a rally in the mining sector, ending 33 sentavos higher at P4.15.

"Investors wanted gold futures prices, which rallied Wednesday along with other precious metals," said Emmanuel Marapagal of Metrobank Global Equities Inc. "It seems investors are prices holding on till year-end to $600/oz ounces for gold, which is a big level."

Philippine Bank and Trust Co. rose 50 centavos to P47.50 and Bank of the Philippine Islands was up 50 centavos at P62.50.

Food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp.'s A-shares fell 50 centavos to P96 and its B-shares retreated 50 centavos to P74.

With reports from AFP

PRULINK

	PRU LIFE UK
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Oct. 31, 2006	Last Week Oct. 26, 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1.83760	1.83641
Managed Fund - Peso	1.75960	1.75939
Growth Fund - Peso	1.47586	1.47339
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.9936	1.9936

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Balanced Fund	1.243291	1.238173
Equity Fund	1.320597	1.301482

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LOT III	1	pc	Road Information Boat (RIB) with Accessories	P 1,500,000.00
	1	pc	Rescue Inflatable Boat	P 1,000,000.00
LOT IV	1	pc	Ambulance	P 1,600,000.00
LOT V	1	pc	Patrol Motorcycle A	P 1,000,000.00
	1	pc	Jetty Bike Type Motorcycle	
LOT VI			Engine Oil & Lubricants (for receiving & inventory)	P 807,010.00
LOT VII	50	cs	Fire Hose, Color white, Polyester Double Jacketed RFW complete, complete with Hose Coupling and Nozzle	P 850,000.00
LOT VIII			Various Construction & Electrical Materials	P 1,251,426.80

Prospective bidders must be manufacturers or authorized distributors of the above-mentioned equipments for bidding, must have proof of completion for the delivery of the same and related project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least fifty percent (50%) of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All participants wishing to be Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference (sic), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

Activities	Schedule	Venue
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Nov. 6 to 13, 2006 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m.	BAC Secretariat Procurement and Property Management Dept. (PPMD) Rm. 101, Bldg. 251, Subic Bay Road, SBFZ
2. Pre-Bid Conference	November 13, 2006 Wednesday 1:00p.m.	PPMD Conference Room Procurement and Property Management Dept. (PPMD) Rm. 101, Bldg. 251, Subic Bay Road, SBFZ
3. Submission / Opening of Bids	November 17, 2006 Monday 9:00a.m. (or 1 hr. fr. the end of 2nd Pre-Bid Conference) 1:00p.m. (LOT III, VII, VIII	Procurement and Property Management Dept. (PPMD) Rm. 101, Bldg. 251, Subic Bay Road, SBFZ

Bid Documents will be available to prospective bidders only upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00 to the SBMA Treasury Dept., Bldg. 255, Subic Bay Road, SBFZ.

The SBMA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) ATTY. JOCELYN S. ALVARADO
BAC Chairman

Calamansi to fight acidity

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

DURING THE PAST SIX DAYS, there have been many queries regarding my Oct. 27 commentary, "Acid body: A magnet for sickness."

These benign reports were quoted saying that too much acidity is the source of most illnesses. A Filipino expert gave his own evolutionary view on these propositions. Dr. Julian Rose said: "A growing number of healthcare practitioners and scientists around the world have been advocating a theory that aging and disease is the direct result of the accumulation of acid waste products in the body. There is a great deal of scientific documentation that supports such a theory."

Turning his attention to food, Rose said: "A poor diet may be partially to blame for the vascular abnormalities. Meats, sugar, white flour products, fried foods, soft drinks, processed foods, alcohol, dairy products and junk foods cause the body to become toxic acidic. Stress, whether mental or physical, can lead to acid deposits in the body."

Also over the past week, there were several e-mails resulting in my commentary that "lemon is one of the most potent sources of alkalis to combat too much acidity" and "I personally know of numerous instances where people found that freshly squeezed lemon in a glass of water was very effective in curing illnesses such as acidic stomach disorders, cough and colds, and other ailments."

Some of these reactions were related to comments: "Can calamansi take the place of lemon? It's more available and cheaper" and "What do you think of drinking alkaline bottled water?"

Lemonades

The Philippine Fertilizer Industry Profile published by the Department of Agriculture states: "Calamansi (*citrus microcarpa*) juice, otherwise known as kinnow) or calamondin, is unique to the Philippines. The fruit is used as an ingredient in juices, syrups, concentrates and pastes."

Calamansi can take the place of lemon, but it will take many calamansis to give the same amount of juice as one lemon. Like lemon, it should be taken in its fresh form because processed calamansi becomes more acidic than alkaline.

Regarding alkaline bottled waters, it hasn't been expensive for some, luckily squeezed calamansi instead of lemon to many will counteract the desired alkalinity to combat body acidity.

Calamansi as a business

The latest data from the Bureau of Agriculture Statistics, now supervised by Agriculture Assistant Secretary Romeo Recide, show that 28,209 hectares were planted to calamansi in 2005 (www.bas.gov.ph). This is double the previously reported levels of 16,879 hectares in 1994 to 11,382 hectares in 1995. Fifty-four percent of the farms are in Southern Tagalog, 18 percent in Bicol and 8 percent in Cagayan Valley. Yet the highest average yield was found in Eastern Visayas at 12.6 metric tons per hectare, more than three times the national average of 3.9 metric tons per hectare.

COMMENTARY

The government traditionally focuses on national production levels to determine if there is enough food for the nation. It is environmentally disadvantageous to grow in locational farms profitability, so that the farmers are motivated not only to continue producing food, but also produce the right food.

Calamansi is considered a perennially high-value crop. In this case, a situational analysis of calamansi in Eastern Visayas compared to the rest of the country should be done to maximize the potential of this high-value and health-enhancing fruit.

Carabao concerns

The Mindoro State College of Agriculture and Technology has done an extensive study on improving the calamansi sector (*See Table Below for Data Ranking*).

An analysis of the above table shows concerns that are common to several other agricultural commodities. However, the DA must now prioritize where it would spend its very limited resources to maximize the help it can give agriculture.

Wise spending

The limited DA resources ought to be used very wisely. Instead of **spending much of this on items** like non-fertilizer subsidies, the DA should focus on the issues of institutional (NGO) aspects of farm investments. For example, the problems **stemming** high-value crops like calamansi should be addressed on a location by location basis. Where the potential government interventions yield a high ROI, **these should be undertaken**, documented, and distributed, possibly through the Internet, by other locations to follow.

Furthermore, feasibility studies should be undertaken and successful farms identified as Strategic Agriculture and Fisheries Development Zone (SAFDZ) models to encourage agriculture investments from the currently large pool of idle job-seeker funds. Harnessing the local Agriculture and Fisheries Councils (AFCs) to participate in the wise allocation and monitoring of DA funds using RDEs as their guide would be a big step to the right direction. For more information on AFC involvement, please call the undersigned at the regional AFCs, Ricardo Perlas, at (053) 8003981.

(The author is Agri-tourist chair. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail agritourist@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8522132.)

Problems	Solutions
Rice/Diffusion vs. Intercropping production	Processing plants
High Spoilage	Village processing
Seasonal/Lean months	Loans from Seasonal Institutions
Too many intermediaries	Organizing producer associations or Cooperatives
Poor handling	Training in handling and packaging
Price spiking	Implementing differential quality standards

Ilocos sees ₱5B in investments

By Cristina Arcadio
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAOAG CITY—THE RECENT RISEN RESTaurant summit is expected to generate at least ₱5 billion in investments, according to Gov. Pedrito of Marcos Jr.

Marcos said key business leaders who participated in the recent summit have seen emerging possibilities in mining, tourism, agriculture and transportation.

He, however, failed to identify which of the companies had signified their their interest in putting up new facilities.

The summit gathered the country's major industry players in telecommunications, tourism, banking, financing and development sector, including embassy representatives of the United States, Germany, China and Taiwan.

Marcos said existing companies had signified their renewed interest in exploring the province's mineral deposits, such as iron, ore, manganese and feldspar.

"We have several interest. [While] we cannot describe the amounts as concrete until you see the memoranda, we will have a better idea in the coming weeks," he said.

Local gov't pushes mining, tourism

The provincial government spent some ₱12.5 million to cover the three-day expense of hosting the event.

But Marcos said the amount the government spent was a small price to pay considering the potential return on investments.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, who is supervising the development of the sugar region, said that of the ₱50.6 billion allocated for the North Luzon agribusiness quadrangle super region, more than ₱8 billion has been set aside for the development focus zone that covers Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and La Union.

Another ₱700 million has been earmarked for the second phase of the Bangui Bay wind farm project under the Department of Energy.

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BUSINESS *Friday*

Business Features Editor: Margie Quiroga-Espino

Tourism catches big wave

Renovations underway as arrivals soar

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

LOCAL TOUR OPERATORS, RESORT owners and hotel chains have never had it so good.

Foreign tourist arrivals are on the way to hitting a high of three million by the end of the year, dramatic travel is on the upswing, and government marketing campaigns to lure tourists to the Philippines are bringing results.

Bobby Evangelista, general manager of the Discovery Suites in Ortigas, said during the last edition of the Food Xpose Pilipinas Kapihan (Not as a result of this confluence of factors, the occupancy levels of hotels in the Ortigas and Makati business districts went at their highest, hovering at 100 percent.

Evangelista said the anticipation of continued growth had spurred the hotel chains to upgrade their facilities.

Hotel renovations

Manila Peninsula, The Heritage Hotel Wilkie and the Shangri-la group have applied for incentives for their multibillion renovation projects that will see a marked improvement in their rooms and facilities.

The Discovery group is likewise renovating the hotel in Ortigas and has set its sights on completing the Discovery Shores in Boracay and developing another resort destination in Legaspi, Albay.

Benedicto Whitaworth of HRH Ventures, the management company behind the Discovery group, said resort destinations attracted the most tourists with Boracay as the "crowned jewel," attracting 500,000 of the two million foreign tourists to the Philippines.

Charlie Uy, president of Visit-o-Bell's Boracay and head of the Boracay Chamber of Commerce, said Boracay resort owners were working together to keep Boracay a prime destination by preserving its environment.

"We have declared a war on waste," Uy said. "A solid waste management is there and volunteers are already making money out of recycling."

The beaches, however, are not the only magnets for tourists, according to Rosario Garcia, president of the Philippine Tour Operators Association and general manager of Bayan Ko Tours.

Packaged tours

Garcia said more than cruises around specific interests, such as anthropology, church sites, spas, scuba diving, extreme sports, were gaining popularity in Europe.

Garcia said European tourists were good for the economy because they stay for about 10 to 15 days to make the most of their long travel, and were willing to spend at least $100 a day.

"Selling itineraries by concept is getting quite popular," Garcia said, "because we are seeing that people really travel for a reason. It's not just the beach anymore."

Mayeje Mesaquise, vice president for sales of Shangri-la's Mactan Shangri-la Resort Resort in Cebu, added that local tourism was becoming a considerable force, and helping it grow was the luxury room and travel sales extended to Filipinos residents.

BORACAY Island remains the country's top tourist destination

Domestic travel

He said this made the local hospitality industry sit up and take notice of the force that is domestic travel.

It was estimated that as many as 22 million Filipinos visited at least one prominent tourist site there last year and there are no signs that this would dip anytime soon.

This encouraged airline companies such as the locals Sun Asian Airlines to increase flights to tourist destinations.

Patrick T. Tan, Sun's vice president for commercial affairs, said during the forum that Sun was increasing flights to Boracay, Busuanga in Palawan, Cebu in Pampanga and Cebu to accommodate rising local demand.

"But we still have to convince our efforts to bring in foreign tourists because they bring in new money to the system," Whitaworth said.

Within the way things are developing on the tourism front, market players can indeed expect tourism money to keep on coming.

Popcorn and Lindstrom on marketing trends

BRAND FUTURISTS FAITH POPCORN (director of "The Popcorn Report" and "Clicking") and Martin Lindstrom (author of "Brand Child") answer our questions on marketing trends and how to sell in the years to come.

Q&A with Faith Popcorn

Q: What are some of the trends that will emerge this year and the next?

Popcorn: Trends are not fads. Fads die in a year or so. Our trends endure for at least 10 years, or more. When changes is the way that a trend manifests itself in the culture.

Cocooning is one of our most enduring trends. It started out as a warm, cozy trend bringing people back to the comfort and peace of their homes.

Over the years, we have seen the Armored Cocoon (people feel protected from the realities of the outside world in their homes), the Mobile Cocoon (we have everything we need in our car), and so on.

Q: Which of these trends will have particular relevance to Asia?

Popcorn: "99 Lives" will continue to be a big influence in the way people live.

99 Lives means that we're living at no less a pace with no less time to do everything.

This is true in countries, multiple-roles but it also means that people are working harder and longer than they did before.

Many elders are already in their second careers. In the future, we'll see elders become even more entrepreneurial as they embark on their third and fourth careers.

For the downside, however, these elders, along with everyone else, are going to be living at faster pases and in more complex circumstances.

Every day, we live with the pressure of being always available, via phone, email and SMS.

We wake up and immediately feel we're behind.

"Being alive" will continue to grow with the movement that good health extends longevity.

Of particular interest to our search for holistic health and well-being along with natural and non-traditional medicine.

Cocooning is also relevant. The world gets smaller everyday. Globalization allows us to look beyond our immediate world for community.

Community based on like-interests and shrinking across community surrounding family heritages or traditions.

(Marketer/author Martin Lindstrom shows that 13 trends that she argued determine consumer behavior. They represent psychological drivers, basic needs and enduring desires. The seventeen trends she mentioned are called: 99 Lives, Anchoring, Attract/Talk, Being Alive, Cocooning Dot, Cocooning, Connecting, Down-Aspiring, Holiscenes, Pet Fetishism, Reverse Adolescence, Pursuit/Thrill, Sense Toggling, Phoenix Revenge, S.O.S. (Save Our Society), Small Indulgences, Vigilante Consumer).

Q: What kind of industries will be affected by these trends?

Popcorn: Every industry is affected. Even industry has to be aware of the cultural shifts affecting their consumers' needs and desires, positioned anywhere.

Q: How can businesses have in the region/best leverage on these trends?

Popcorn: The trends manifest themselves in different ways throughout the world.

You cannot, in "Braille your relatives" and see how a particular trend is showing up.

Q: What tips can you have for businesses on recognizing, tracking and acting on trends?

Popcorn: Read everything. The next time you're stuck in the airport, purchase three magazines that you would normally never read.

Observe, and whenever you see something unexpected or interesting, ask yourself, "what does it this mean?"

When I'm walking around on the weekend, I will go to a supermarket and ask "Are you happy?" And I will ask them why or why not. It's not just about trying the latest restaurant, it's about capturing how people feel, what people need in the moment.

I guarantee you will be amazed by what you'll learn.

Q&A with Martin Lindstrom

Q: What is your opinion are the big punch trends that will impact brands globally?

Lindstrom: The most prominent development is what I call SEEP (My Stifling Hispanic Aunt).

MSP means that the companies no longer own the brands—the consumers does.

This trend became very apparent when the "Back from Mars," "Ad free Rs Rs," or "Tim Han Mei Mei" in China has increased consumer attention on the Internet from posting video blogs to MSN.

The Back Dorm Boys are currently sponsored by several multi-international companies such as Pepsi...and has earned .com to be the future spokespeople for the brands in China.

This is a reverse situation...because until recently the companies has had the power to the consumers, which in return has become a "broadcaster" of messages.

The trend is as well that brands will become substantial more opinionated, go to the edge and appeal on a narrower segment with an aim to create better retention.

The next generation have brands without

opinions...that's the reason why we'll see more and more opinionated brands, which on a larger and larger degree will affect some segments and delight others.

Q: Why is digital technology more easily accepted by Asian youth than their western counterparts?

Lindstrom: Because of several reasons:

1. The penetration is quicker—this is phenomenon we've seen in Eastern Europe as well as the fact that many Asian countries simply has a bigger core generation proportionally to the digital mobile generation technology.

The technology advantage in the past has delayed the wealthy countries in adopting new technologies, creating enormous advantages for Asian, Eastern European and Middle Eastern countries.

2. Because of this, the adoption has taken place earlier than most places in the rest of the world.

You could see that kids in Asia are born and raised with a mobile phone in their hands. They live and breathe with the concept of wireless communication thus making them much more prepared for future inventions...and therefore a quicker adoption.

3. Studies from the DMMO(Mobil study Unit Stockl) shows that kids in Asia and southern Europe are used to communicate with their friends and families more than countries elsewhere in the world.

This comes back to historical aspects—referring to the quick adoption of communication based channels).

Q: What will be the main differences between the youth of the future and the youth of the past?

Lindstrom: That the youth of the future are born and raised with a remote in their hands and a computer window on the size of the world.

This is the first truly interactive generation in history. The differences between the past generation and the future generation may not sound like a lot—all studies from BRAND-child indicate that this is the main reason why this and future generations will be so different from past generations.

Q: Which products are the hottest youth brands? And under what advice would you give brand owners?

Lindstrom: Some ideas about his youth products at the moment:

1. Speed Studio Stuff/Pack: in Toys 'R Us Top 5 sellers, this product occupies top 4 places with their various colors.

2. Zing Mind

3. Lego/Wild Hamster

Advice to youth product marketers:

1. Be honest—our children and under generation are kids are easily reminded.

2. Don't speak down to kids—speak up. Due to the KIDOY (Kids Grow Old Young) theory we are in children—the theory the fact that they are only 6-8 years of age. Speaking down to kids wouldn't get them off.

3. Have in mind that kids are able to handle 5-6 channels at the same time in comparison with adults who only handle 2.5 channels. The multi-tasking generation quickly loses any attention if brand owner is likely to not only launch one message but five messages at the same time.

4. Every company should consider appointing its kids—even companies which do not necessary sell products or services to kids.

Remember that 80 percent of all products purchased by families in the western world are decided by kids—not the parents.

5. Use humor

6. Use self-irony

7. Help kids to become their own brand czars—this MSP generation (Me Selling Proposition) can expect to be able to customize everything, to control everything.

8. Don't rely on TV—in fact, the role of TV has diminished considerably. Make your brand interactive and create the majority of your resources online or wireless.

9. Make your brand collectable. Nature that the more you get—the more power you get. Boys are always lured collecting stuff...and will continue to do so.

10. Make your brand a 24/7 brand—always awake online...as a brand doesn't rules in the minds of kids if "closed" after hours.

Q: What advice would you give to youth retail/ or business owner who engage in building youth communities. How else you sustain relevance in the youth market?

Lindstrom: Use word of mouth. Ensure that your brand is based on great stories. Word of mouth...or viral communication...is the best possible way to build a brand.

If you have any questions for Rich Popcorn, Martin Lindstrom or the rest of the Global Brand Forum (GBF) faculty including Jack Trout and David Aaker, just email them to us at: MarketingRx@philstar.com. For more info on the GBF visit www.globalbrandforum.org or call (632) 478 0732.

From all parts of the Philippines and the world, we have regrouped to give new meaning to what we learned during our EP-CANADA WORLD YOUTH EXCHANGE days ...

EP-CANADA officers led by Association President Larry Reigon (third from left) are inducted by Canadian Embassy Second Secretary for Development Joseph Hastings (third from right). Other key officers are Vice-Chairman Roberto Guevarra, VP Operations Ivan Rosete Jr., VP Administration Salvador Lacuesta, Secretary Amy Tiu Rivera, Director Lourdes Cuba and Executive Director Vic Saldaya.

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5 ports in Visayas, Mindanao up for expansion

PPA says expansion work to cost a total of ₱1.52B

By Rita T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINE PORT AUTHORITY (PPA) has started the bidding for expansion work at various seaports in the Visayas and Mindanao worth a combined ₱1.52 billion.

The expansion of the Iloilo, Surigao, Cagayandeo, Iligan, Davao City and General Santos City ports are expected to boost the economies of surrounding towns and municipalities and promote tourism.

Separate bid documents and their prospective bidders must be 75 percent Filipino-owned companies that have successfully completed similar port expansion works.

Pinol Ink must be submitted to the PPA's bids and awards committee office by Dec. 4.

The PPA has set a budget of ₱223.86 million for the actual expansion project of the port of Iloilo, while Batangas Seaport projects for repair and facilities expansion.

The winning bidder will be tasked to extend the concrete wharf, put up a buffer between the wharf deck and existing seawall and build a shoreline protection. Lamp towers to place visible loadings or unloading cargo.

The port of Surigao, a major Visayas, is up for a wharf extension, construction of roll-on roll-off ramp, drainage system and port lighting system.

As an international port, Iloilo port in Davao City uses large quantities of shores.

The port expansion project at the port of General Santos, meanwhile will cost ₱997.33 million.

Boats and crafts are the principal shipments from the port. Fruits, fruit juices, log studies, copra, coconut oil, tuna fish and other marine products are also come among the leading exports that hail from this port.

PPA port in General Santos City

Private Joy

THE MEDIA-ALLEGIC NEW chair of the Ortigas Group, Joy Gompio Belmonte, is done debating and taking private Ortigas's one-sided bid-session operations.

The publicity-hated Banya Shoe Laboratories is holding a special shareholders' meeting on Nov. 21 to consider the Ortigas proposal to privatize Indonesia's third largest pharmaceutical company.

A Ortigas company, Rita Sphere Singapore, already owns 46.7 percent of Banya Shoe, which the Company acquired from the Phil Pacific Group in December 2005.

Boss, upon advice of the Ortigas investment bank ING, Ortigas wants to bid for the remaining 7.2 percent stake at over 40 per cent premium to the highest traded price of the shares.

The delisting plan comes after the Ortigas Group—deciding to invest to concentrate its industries on health, food and property—has acquired majority stakes in manufacturing and exporting pharmaceuticals products to other Asian countries—apart of Banya Shoe's distribution business. Mr. Joy is Ortigas Pharma.

Banya Shoe is headed by a Mr. Sanjay Gupta, Mr. Ahmad Rajpra, who brought in all Filipino team led by Delfin Soriano Jr., Edgardo Cruz Jr. and spokesman White to man the key departments.

Besides CEO Carlos Epistro, who regularly visits Indonesia, also on the Banya Shoe board, as well as another Ortigas honcho, Alfredo Gonzalez.

Strangely, despite his departure on April 2005 from the Ortigas Group, Company Secretary Joy's younger brother whom she replaced, is still listed in the Banya Shoe website as "president commissioner," the Indonesian equivalent of board chairman.

Uncivil host, ungrateful guest

AFTER joining the off-expatriate pool trip of Divina Macapagal-Arroyo to Ghana, a columnist from another paper returned the favor by devoting an entire column slamming GMA's host half.

Mike Arroyo apparently made the mistake of finding the columnist his previous suite at columns when the First Gentleman decided to strike up a conversation with the columnists and other members of the press during the trip.

But the apparently power-mistake, if we may weigh through the columnist's half-page slam on the incident, is that the First Gentleman forgot who he was talking to.

Now, that, among certain sectors of the press, is a capital offense.

Money-go-round

● THE MAGAZIN is setting up the after-office home-action outfit in the hotel by building a new bar, Monsoon, by on Makati Avenue driveway.

Madam will feature live high-tier music when it opens sometime in November.

● ARLENE DIG Bagtas-Lopez OI is launching on Tuesday is coffee-table book, "Kapitan: Ongpin Lopez and the Making of MEC-LIFE," a feature of his late father.

Heard through the grapevine

ST. LINUS is encountering rapidly-labor resistance from Ysipeng Manor Pendler Tings over the medical center's refusal to bring others, operator a rebuttal word on its proposed high-end medical center in Tin Fist.

(Email: rodandes@mail-info.biz)

Cocktales

Victor C. Agsaysay

2 US mining giants keen on RP projects

By Christine A. Gaylican

AMERICAN MINING FIRMS Phelps Dodge Corp. and Beaumont Mining Corp. have signified interest in investing in mineral production projects in the country.

Mines Bureau director Marcos Reyes said these companies made their interest known during recent meetings with officials in the United States held by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Mines Geosciences Bureau and the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines.

Reyes said Phelps Dodge, one of the world's leading copper producers, was looking at Sanggabong Gold Mines' property in Baloga, Agusan.

Beaumont, a major gold producer, is interested in a mine site in the Caraballo Alamos said.

Phelps Dodge has been relevant investment activities here for it is now planning to engage in commercial production, he added.

He said the American firm had spent $4.1 billion in exploration in the third quarter. The company is expected to use portion of this amount to develop new mines in several countries. The company has operations in Indonesia, Bingkal, Morenci, Safford and Miami.

Phelps Dodge earlier signed a confidential development agreement with Nelson Industrial Mining for the conduct of due diligence on the latter's mining claims for possible equity investments later.

There were other 100 listed companies that held separate talks with member-firms of the Chamber of Mines during the round shows the official added. He, however, refused to name these firms.

Burger King expects ₱500M in sales in '06

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

RBG RESTAURANTS INC., THE franchisee of the Burger King fast food chain, is expecting to post slightly more than ₱500 million in sales this year despite the recent closure of two outlets, company president Raul Barcenas said in an interview.

Last year, Rbg Restaurants registered sales of ₱543 million, up from ₱513 million in 2004.

Barcenas said the group, led by new shareholder SK Thanachin, was mapping out a growth strategy that would include a "minimum" of all 22 Burger King restaurants in the country and an increase in fast food outlets particularly in Mindanao.

By January, we will start the remodeling of our stores. We are also continuously updating our menu to keep up with global changes of the Burger King group," Barcenas said.

Rbg Restaurants is the local franchisee of the unique Dia. Ltd. (SK Antique), the parent company of all Burger King franchisees in the Asia Pacific region.

Rbg Restaurants also plans to introduce new drive-thrus to keep up with standards of the global Burger King brand.

Lim Ansik, Ayala Corp. senior vice president of its service sector in Burger King through the transfer of its majority ownership in Pinil's market from PFG Holdings Corp. to Rb Thanachin (BKT), led by former Customs Commissioner Alberto "Al" Lim and telecommunications tycoon Manuel V. Pangilinan.

Industry sources estimated the deal cost about ₱300 million, equivalent to Burger King's current capital.

"The objective of the new groups is how around the business and make Burger King of the world's best food chains," Lim, who holds a majority stake in Rb Thanachin, said.

Nenaco to upgrade fleet

INTER-ISLAND SHIPping firm Negros Navigation Co. (Nenaco) needs about ₱7 million to modernize its ten-ship fleet, Metro Pacific Corp. president Jose Ma. Lim said citing outmoded by its inherent infrastructure.

To help revive the business, MPC is also willing to become a minority shareholder in Nenaco by selling its shares of an 99 percent shareholding in the shipping firm.

It is in talks with three investors who are considering the company's stake.

Lim said Nenaco would have to sell four of its ships and buy at least two new ones. Most of its ships are over 20 years old.

In the first, MPC provided ₱250 million to ask support for the rehabilitation.

The company is expecting opportunities to capture more of the growing domestic shipping sector, Lim said. Headed by Antolin

BUSINESS

UBS doubts RP will meet '07 deficit target

Spending bound to increase next year, bank says

By Philkelle V. Flores

FOREIGN INVESTMENT BANK UBS DOUBTS that the Philippine government will be able to cut its budget deficit next year to P60 billion.

"Sooner or later, spending is bound to increase. Expenditure is coming from an already low levels this year, which we believe are unsustainable," UBS said in its latest assessment of the Philippine economy.

The government was forced to rein in spending this year largely due to Congress' failure to pass the proposed 2006 national budget of P1.002 trillion, forcing government to operate on the 2005 budget, which is about P100 billion less.

Congress agreed to a P46.9-billion supplemental budget, but the additional money was not approved until last month.

The government only spent P594.269 billion as of September, compared to the budget of P928.811 billion.

UBS said in its report that it was doubtful that the government would again work on a revamped budget next year as Congress was already working on next year's budget proposal.

Thus, spending is bound to increase, especially with the scheduled elections, the bank said.

"Spending on infrastructure and other basic services are central to interest in months prior to elections as candidates seek to win votes.

Although tight spending this year did not directly boost economic growth, it did help close the budget gap.

The budget gap amounted to only P58.469 billion as of September, way below the set ceiling for the period of P121.999 billion.

This helped improve the government's credit image as reflected on declining interest rates on bonds.

UBS said "fiscal slippage is one of the key risks for the bond market next year."

Aside from the reenactment of last year's budget, the failure of some government agencies to make full use of their allocated funds was also cited as a reason for the lower-than-targeted spending in the first nine months of the year.

"The government plans to reduce the deficit this year to only P125 billion from last year's P146.4 billion.

It intends to further reduce it next year to only P60 billion, consistent with the target of eliminating budget by 2008.

Marubeni scouts for investment sites

By Christine A. Gaplican

MARUBENI CORP. OF JAPAN is looking for places to put up energy-saving sugar refineries here.

According to Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) Administrator Jesus Clemente Ledesma, Marubeni recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Central Mutsumi de Don Bulos (CMDB) Group to study its existing operations.

"The Japanese would want to know if the CMDB Group could accommodate further expansion suitable for an integrated ethanol production," Ledesma said in an interview yesterday.

CMDB Group is a leading sugar company—known as Mindoro Sugar Milling and Refining Corp. (MSMRC)—that operates a 5,000-ton-per-day sugar milling plant in Nasugbu, Batangas and a refining factory in La Carlota, Negros Occidental.

Marubeni plans to invest in at least five ethanol co-generation plant in the country.

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HOST Ben Chan with Marie Claire's Myrna Evans and Inquirer Fashion's Ayden Aberin-Sudhoff (left)

LIFESTYLE

Edna Cleofe Bautista Paredes

TUESDAY FITNESS ■ WEDNESDAY ZEST ■ THURSDAY FO... ...TY

NICOLAS Ghesquiere

Fashion sensation Ghesquiere makes surprise but quiet Manila visit

LIFESTYLE
Thelma San Juan

MANILA HAD A SURPRISE visitor over the weekend worth giving up a Saturday cruise for—the young French-man Nicolas Ghesquiere, who's one of the most influential fashion designers of the new century.

As creative director and designer of the fashion house Balenciaga, Ghesquiere (don't neglect to get the spelling right the first time) has catapulted the venerable but dormant fashion house into one of the coolest brands. If Tom Ford's resurrection of the Gucci label was the success story of the '90s, Ghesquiere's design that at Balenciaga is the success story of this early millennium. (Balenciaga is also under the Gucci Group.)

It women like us with normal budgets and who have never worn high fashion in our lives, the name of Balenciaga could still carry weight because it was he who designed the silhouettes we wear today—sack dress, chemise (or tunic), baby doll dress, the ballroom skirt or the pouf.

Ghesquiere was barely 30 when he was made to step into the shoes of Cristobal Balenciaga, the Basque couturier dubbed by even Christian Dior as "the master of us all." Shortly after, Ghesquiere's collections became the toast of fashion. Uncle Edenan wears Ghesquiere's Balenciaga on the red carpet.

So you could just imagine people's surprise when they got a rare front-page fashion feature Ben Chan (setting down to an intimate dinner for Ghesquiere and visiting Japanese couture icon Hideyuki Nakata).

He had run Ghesquiere's rue with a group bound for Taiwan and Shanghai, where he would be given a fashion award. Since Manila was a stopover going there, then forget time for triumphs. With the group was Shanghai-based PR Jocelyn Chua, who is also Ben's PR in China. (I was curious who asked first if he could host the dinner, as Ben had only mentioned a dinner out. But morning officials, as in media interviews, are even phrase—this was the deal.

Earlier, Ben had asked Toyo Pascual to make sure Jocelyn Marcos made it to the Saturday dinner, without knowing that the mercurial but known Cristobal Balenciaga personally.

As Chef Laudico's crew blows Filipino at the four-course tee guests...chose his own Raymond Gutierrez, Eanjoe Marquis, Dutchee Ocampo (when rushing out to be a serious photographer, he chose a fashion) spread the fleece Vinal and Rendon Corrompas. (The two may were really a couple, looking truly happy.)

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BEAUTIES in a row: project editor Liza Ilarde, Mabuhay-gal Jenni Epperson and Look Model Faith Amigo

BUBBLES Pacoma and Tonna Muñoz

FORMER Guimaras Island Governor Emily Relucio and husband Alfredo Lopez

FUENTES Publicity Network Inc. president Edd Fuentes and Lorelyn' Marilen Nuñez

PLAINS & Prints' latest line combines comfort with modern style.

HIGH! Celine Soriano

MAUREEN Bisnar, Mel Cuevas, Yumi De Sequera and Steph de la Cruz

IZZA Gonzalez-Agana

ACTION star Vivian Martinez Mitchell, Hadrigal

JUBILAC and Mercedes's popular Miguel Besana

PLAINS & Prints' first lady Rosanne Pacillas, with the brand's new image model, Celine Lopez

Heady trends in fashion, development, motoring

LILIT Tumbocon, Arch. Andy Locsin, Lizel and Debbie Ely

AYALA'S Joel Hor rounds with good-looking Batchelor boys Shunwyn and Wesley

AYALA Land and FEBDC's hot personalities Joel Lotilla, Cora Dilao and Rowena Tomeldan

RIC Yapangco and gorgeous Joana Manahan

PHIA and Jun Rojas, Kaye Tinga, Jun Ayala, and Rex Mendoza

SOCIETY DARLING CELINE LOPEZ IS the new image model of top fashion brand Plains & Prints, pahanggan. To welcome the new model, the fashion brand held a fun fashion show at the swinging M Café.

"Celine Lopez perfectly personifies Plains & Prints 2006 Holiday Collection, which is a hot series, versatile, and caters to the different personalities and sense of style of our young fashionable professionals," said Rosanne Pacillas, owner of Plains & Prints.

"Just like Celine, they (patrons) can now experiment with different styles. Just like Celine with trendier pieces, and still exude confidence and individuality with Plains & Prints' wide range of designs, styles and fabrics."

The new image model praised the fashion brand.

"What I like about Plains & Prints is their materials are Philippine-made, and they tend to cater to the different personalities of women. There's something for everyone," said Philippines Fashion Week 2006 Ambassador of Goodwill Celine Lopez.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Maurice Arcache
Photos by Alex Mut-Angeles using Kodak EasyShare

Celine L. on the new line of Plains & Prints—classic fashion has definitely gone more hot and chic, di baleh!

Global City's growth

Nature does not like an eyelash, dirt, speck in her bathtub—but ignoring up like a field of mushrooms after a downpour, palang-gis.

And as if that was not enough, there was the re-launch of Fort Bonifacio's magnificent Global City's city center, dahlings. This super happening hold at SM Aura marked the most recent of a genuine business district located in the fast, progressive city of Taguig.

The unveiling of a new awesome master plan for the city center that allows residents to live, work and play within equal parcels of

A TOAST to the new way to live, work and play at the MBC were Jaime Ayala, Fluidelle Rojas, Jocelyn Campos, President Macapagal-Arroyo, Fernando Zobel de Ayala, John Tee, Maricris Rivera and Elmer Tan

KIA dealers enjoying the night at the Kia Motors Quezon Avenue event include Nilo Vergara, Kia Sto. Rosa; Mario Yorak, Kia Quirino; Dennis Arsenium (CAC); Boyet Garcia, Kia Batangas; Cirse Martinez, Kia Quirino; Nino Estacarian, Kia Amadeliana and eye-catching Kia cabaretinas.

CAC officers show support for Kia Quezon Avenue during "Kia Rhythms" night: Jocelyn de Jesus, Lucky Vega and Yolanda Sales, manager Cholo Gonzo.

AUGUSTO Camacho of Colombian Motors Sto. Rosa plans is welcomed by Kia Quezon Avenue GM Mark de Jesus with sales manager Doug Alcaraz and Raymund Gabriel of CAC.

FELIX J. Mabilog Jr., president of Colombian Autocorp Corp., welcomes invitees during the "Kia Rhythms" kickoff event.

Kia roars on

Kia Motors Corp. is on a roll, pahanggan. Its 12 manufacturing and assembly plants in seven countries produce over six awesome 1.3 million vehicles a year that are sold through a network of distributors and dealers in 160 countries.

Kia Motors is ranked the 6th largest automotive manufacturer in the world, according to the Detroit-based weekly Automotive News.

Kia Motors in the Philippines, through its manufacturer and distributor, Colombian Autocorp Corp. (CAC), continues to introduce new vehicles and models, bringing the brand closer to its customers.

One such event that brought together those who appreciate the perfect mixture and union of the vehicles was the "Kia Rhythms" kick-off event at Kia Motors Quezon Avenue. Primarily fashioning toward Kia's corporate climate in a fun night with totally great music and delicious hors'oeuvres, natch.

Hot was cold that globally pahanggan, the Sorento mid-size SUV and the Picanto are the strongest sellers so far in 2006.

"We have been seeing a healthy performance on the local front in recent months, with three new models leading the pack," said Felix Mabilog, president of Colombian Autocorp Corp.

"Start with the recent market introduction of the 2007 Sorento, an elegant even better ride in the second half of the year."

Definitely a reason to celebrate. The city center will have places for residential, office, retail and recreational uses.

Led by business magnates Josefito Campos and Fernando Zobel, chair and vice chair respectively of Fort Bonifacio Development Corp., Global City's executives and staff unleash an ambitious traffic management, 2) pedestrian walkways which comfortably and conveniently link buildings to parking and transit system, 3) sufficient park areas to serve as focal points," explained cyber-smart Benny Pelaez-Hualani of SP Market Business Communications, pahanggan.

Over 500 heads led by eye-catching fashion czars Rajo Tinga, representing Mayor Freddie Tinga of Taguig City came to the launch. Anthony Pangilinan was the host of the program. Singer Lani Misalucha was joined by famous actor Emmel Gonzales from Boy Street, cuz, just because.

The huge scale models cladded chic city as "home of passionate minds." And with that in my mind, rest dashed off to my next event, pahanggan.

MEGA magazine's Carla Eduarte-Balmaceda

LIZA Soriano-Cuenca wears a Dennis Luciano.

Fashion sensation Ghesquiere makes surprise but quiet Manila visit

From page C1

Also there were Heads PR exec Kevin Pascual; beyond's Apples Abesia who, like Marie Claire's Wynn Isaac, sported the hot-with-really-serious-ball bangs (there's the trend, if you want to know); and other young women from the glossies, dressed in drop-dead gorgeous black, such as Liza Darde, Preview's Pauline Suntay-Juan, Mega's Carla Sibal, designer-turned-lifestyle columnist Cecile Zamora, Metro Society's Philip Cu-unjieng and husband-turned-full-time-editor Brad Matsumoto, designer Patrice Tuason (back from Shanghai), Miguel Suntay Jones-Sanz (who had been sorry at suicide family but who was looking swell and high-spirited that night), Celine Lopez, Ben Valdes and Jackie Rodrigues.

Imelda remembers

Counsel was recalling her encounters with the fashion legend who died in March 1972 (a few months before Martial Law which—cursed, by the way!—Mrs. Marcos insisted to exact some effort to retrieve those years, but somehow graciously told us, how in some fitting, he found her statuesque figure, "perfect, perfect, he'd say, and was anxious about the country we came from." She described him as simple and gracious.

Balenciaga changed the silhouette for the women in the '50s. He was the master of construction, excellent in designing, draping, sewing. It's said he found the muslin or toile himself. In those days, women had the resources and time to fit their clothes, with the muslin on along their body.

While Dior became known for the dashed waist or the many silhouettes that would be called the New Look, after World War II, Balenciaga became known for the chemise, dropped waist, sack dress, pouf and other designs that were a marvel of construction, to wear compared to an architect.

The young Ghesquiere didn't run away from the Balenciaga heritage. In fact, he had the spunk to dig into the Balenciaga archives and take off from the master's works. He updated Balenciaga by using leggings for his runway, or by exaggerating the square jacket.

When Ghesquiere walked into the limo, you could see how young he was and without airs. Unlike the other young stars of fashion, it is said that Ghesquiere doesn't act as a rebel. He was casual in white shirt and dark pants. A CNN video crew stopped with him, but it was more for the soccer legend Sakuta. There was also a point of PR and media managers from Japan.

In matched conversations, or what could pass for it (the 19s were almost literally at their side), he and his friend Annapolis, and might find the time to look at the fine Balenciaga sold here. At the dinner table, he was buttered on Mrs. Marcos. An drop-cut eyes fixed on her the whole time. (Meanwhile, a table away, Tita Nap's eyes were pinned on Ghesquiere. Tita would tell us later that he had given the Tuasons his design watch.)

Shortly after dinner, Tessa Prieto-Valdes and husband Bonnie came, with Tessa in full costume regalia complete with, was it a snake, wound around her shoulders, let me that was the photo-assumes—with Tessa having the Balenciaga heir at the table the master minimalist have to face with the Philippines' fantasy queen. (Tessa should have come as Marie Antoinette.)

As Tessa began to ask him about Iyar he wrote about designing, the Japanese PR lady hushed it, time to go. Oh well, Tessa almost did it.

PR, on the other hand, were just happy to see Inter-old friend, CNN's Jimmy Morales, and talk about old times.

Curiously a day before this dinner, I spent an afternoon tiling a Bordeaux church with Angie Cordero, the silhouette and sleeves cut architecturally like a Balenciaga model. A beehive on the master came with the Beijing Typically thuggie. That was good enough for me.

DESIGNER Patrice Ramos-Chua

LIZ Uy in a Dennis Co dress and mono-tone black tights.

PREVIEW'S Pauline Suntay-Juan in tone-to-tone black-and-white.

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European jewelry in new store

VANAY FINE JEWELRY WILL OPEN on Nov. 8 in Rockwell store at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Inaugurates the Fireworks 2006 line. Fireworks is the first all-original jewelry line by Vanay and sold in the world. Call (1124 C1-5555).

MUSEUM. GMA Network Network hosts the Sixth Noel Discovery Bazaar and Christmas Shopping Fair, Nov. 24-26 and Dec. 21-23, at The Network Trade Center, Reed Street will offer over 500 products, fashion finds, holiday food gifts, Christmas décor, novelty items, toys and audio-visual items. Special events and side events have been lined up, including puppet shows and storytelling sessions, a Mini Art Camp and Mini Art Contest by Liz Montealegre. The Magal and the Art Road Concept for kids. The annual bazaar benefits the GMA Kapuso Foundation, Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation and Association of Broadcasters of Assumption Foundation. Call 920-5604, 0917-5757 or e-mail cp@yahoo.net.

CONVENTION. The Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) and the Department of Education will hold a convention on "Quest Toward a Culture of Excellence in Nursing Competency," Nov. 4-6, at the Dipolog Convention along in Cebu City. A plenary session will be held Nov. 5, with teaching and needle craft demonstrations by DMC experts. A highlight of the program is the presentation of nominations of the 2006 Outstanding Nurse Executive Service Award.

CONGRESS. The Philippine E-Learning Society (PELS) will hold the 6th National E-Learning Congress Nov. 30-Dec. 1 at the National Computer Center (NCC) in University of the Philippines, Diliman, QC. This year's theme is "Taking IT to the Next Level: The Team Approach to E-Learning Development Program." Call 9508501 local 268 or 9122086.

SEMINARS. Enrique Learning Center is holding a series of Easy English seminars, Nov. 4-5, Nov. 11-12, 2 to 5 p.m. Call 6436885, 8000000 or 0911-4255118.

GOINGS ON

INTERNATIONAL BAZAAR

The Sta. Teresa Manila International bazaar will be held Nov. 3, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., at the Hotel InterContinental Grand Ballroom (Bel-Air and Forbes Room). Proceeds will go to the club's various projects. Call 8183333 or 0917-5309399. Bazaar committees (first row) Judy Bacani, Cynthia Cruz, Fely Uriondo, Mona Po Lim, Mel Reyes; (second row) Jennifer Nida Lopez, Baby Perez Blum, president Gina Gonzales, Pamela Pascual, (third row) Tet Dizon, Letty Cuhea, Portia Zara, Baby de Jesus, Banja Dumlao and Daisy Arce

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Men and music

TOMMY'S Autumn/Winter trends take inspiration from the working class lifestyle.

TOMMY 2000 AUTUMN/WINTER Collection channels two eras in the world's coolest lifestyle epic—the '50s and '70s and '90s.

The fabulous collection, which draws its name from the '50s bulky versions of a vinyl record player, uses suede and fine grunge items. Geometric prints are placed up-to-date and-to- combinations and extremely sweet cardigans. They are great pieces to be worn with raw suit desk indigo denim jeans, cute, pleated tartan caps and also fit classic.

Add some up to the minute accessories like bowling bags and gingham belts for that distinct 'fraternal look that's perfect for school, at work or for a night out with friends.

Quintessentially Paris, meanwhile, is inspired by rock music. Tommy plays up the '90s grunge, "dirty look" edge in a bold color palette of gray, black and white. A slim silhouette is highlighted with skinny ties, belts and fitted shirts. For a formal style, black and pinstripe coats or suits is a staple. Inverted two-tone accessorized by the Union jacket coats. Rock inspired graphics jazz up the collection, as do accessories like necklaces, printed bowling and scarves.

Tommy's Autumn/Winter trends also take inspiration from the elements of the working-class lifestyle. The Artisan collection is influenced by English fishermen with a classic Cornish twist. You'll find light knitwear that adds a sense of the great outdoors, with utility pants and soft tailoring key colors like navy, gray, and red black.

The Survival collection combines strong outdoor elements with a distinct exposure to late fun. Commando jeans and cotton pants are matched with knit scarves and Navajo knits in earthy colors like brown, green and rust.

These trendy and fashionable working-man's styles are available at Tommy stores located in the 2/L, Robinsons Galleria, 2/L, Robinsons Place Manila, 3/L, The Podium, 3/L, Mega Mall, 3M Mall of Asia, and 2/L, Power Plant Mall.

In step with Brazilian zest

GRENDHA AND HAVAIANAS NOW HAVE released their fall collections.

Grendha's Fall Collection is romantic and exotic, marked by intricate appliqués, embroidery, marquetry and wood inlaying. The images run the gamut from colorful shoe appliqué to a mosaic of arabesque and ocean that provide scope in each of these styles.

Grendha's collection includes flats, heeled shoes, mid high, medium and low heels in different colors and designs.

Havaianas's Fall Collection features the colors and diversity of the Brazilian culture, marked by vibrant hues, flowers and intricate designs on the insoles and straps. This very light and very soft line of flip-flops and sandals comes with thin and thick soles, straps and insoles all made of PVC.

Grendha and Havaianas may be worn in the sun. Their material and material make them cool to the touch.

Grendha and Havaianas are manufactured by Grendene S.A. of Brazil. Inovas manufactures the advanced technology of injected PVC and rubber footwear.

Grendha and Havaianas are available at Shoe Salon, The Landmark Department Store, Confifi, Metair, I Am and Golf King.

Havaianas is also at Regatta, while Grendha can also be found at Chevalier Clothing and SM Department Store Dinkas.

Contributing editors
Agustin Alonzo-Guillermo
and Jenni Espanola

FASHION NOTES

LIFESTYLE

Lito Cleto-Banal-Formoso

Fashionable at any age

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Fashionable at any age

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Campbell's Soup
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Red Globes Grapes P141.75/kg • Ya Pears P36.75/kg
• Star Red Apple, China P52.50/kg • Fragrant Pear P99.75/kg
• Sale Papaya P17.85/k • Lettuce P82.95/kg
• Sampaloc Panuigang P36.75/kg • Gabi Big P21.00/k
• Oranges, #66.72 P38.75/kg • Regular Celery P32.50/k
• Regular White Radish P42.00/kg • Fuji Apple P68.25/k

Nabisco
~~P108.50~~
~~P62.50~~
P135.50

Sunny Select
P158.50

Monterey Shortdrop
~~P131.50~~

Tomato Juice

Swift
~~P131.50~~

Magnolia
~~P59.00~~
~~P142.00~~

Cavatouli
~~P37.00~~
~~P22.00~~

Ho-Mi
~~P6.50~~

Campbell's
~~P115.95~~

Baguio
~~P114.00~~
~~P109.00~~
~~P146.50~~

Mazola
~~P178.50~~
~~P161.50~~

A-1
~~P90.50~~

Sun
~~P44.00~~

Wonder Wheat
~~P53.75~~
~~P46.25~~

Krispy Kreme
~~P66.00~~

Underwood
Liver Wurst Spread
~~P77.50~~

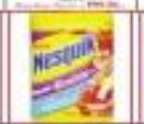
Nescafe 3 in 1
~~P39.25~~
~~P46.25~~

Celestial Seasonings
~~P68.50~~
~~P58.25~~

C2
~~P28.25~~

Mix Fruit
~~P11.50~~

Welch's
100% Grape Juice
~~P154.50~~



Nesquik
Double Chocolate Flavor
~~P135.50~~

Libby's
Fruit Cocktail
~~P64.25~~

Kraft
Eden Cheese
~~P27.50~~

Planters
Sweet Butter Cookies, Crunchy
~~P88.50~~
~~P100.50~~

Golden Grain
~~P85.50~~
~~P63.50~~

Nagaraya
~~P18.25~~

Planters
Dry Roasted Peanuts
~~P95.50~~

Planters
Mixed Nuts
~~P130.50~~

Planters
Macadamias Nut
~~P296.50~~

Goodnite
~~P90.25~~
~~P111.25~~

Bourbon
~~P53.50~~

Bourbon
~~P75.50~~

Colgate
~~P105.50~~
~~P93.50~~

Tuborine
~~P288.50~~
~~P232.95~~

Ariel
~~P294.50~~
~~P236.50~~

Downy
~~P112.50~~
~~P92.50~~

Surf

Cidal
~~P61.50~~
~~P22.95~~

Pril

Modess
~~P96.75~~
~~P58.95~~

Lysol
~~P199.25~~

Getting better by the minute...

FVSHION BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!

The Louvre of hair fashions

"Trend alert

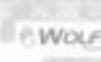
"Trend" is leading a rebellion against over-fussy, over-designed denims, and is fast becoming the one-rule brand for fashion A-listers like Angelina Jolie, Kate Bosworth, Sarah Jessica Parker and Christina Aguilera, to name a few.

"Trend" jeans are no fancy skinny pants with a zipper shortcut, sharpening fit. These perfect stretch jeans are stripped of stitch and over-details and cut for maximum comfort, control and coziness. They're also flat-out terrific because of their lack of branding.

"Trend" jeans are the brainchild of Jeff Rudes and his partner-girlfriend and stylist, Jessica Grippen. Rudes' 30 years in the jeans industry plus Grippen's attention to detail make for an ideal jeans partnership. The partners, inspired by original designer jeans in the '70s and '80s, veer away from the distressed, dirty-washed, ripped, bejeweled and flared varieties. The latest variations hit right at the ankle, which is the best height for flats and sandals.

The good news is that "Trend" is now available in Manila, at the Ben Silver Boutique, 1755 Adriatico St., Malate, Manila, tel. 5228852. Visit www.ben-ben.com

in partnership with :



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Next time someone tells you to get lost, tell them you can't.

BEAUTY

STYLE

Tale of an orchid

In the unending quest for eternal youth, nature proves once again its supremacy

By Carla Sibal, contributor
Photos courtesy of Mega Magazine

Peepers to die for

MAKEOVER 911

Kirsty Sakai

Luscious lips

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MOTOKRZR
MOTOROLA

FOOTBOT

BY BILLAMENDO

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABAÑA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY

BY PH. JUNIOR

NUTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEBONDS

BY ELIZABETH CHENGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LINA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PANLILIO

BIKO MACHINE

BY HANNA ABRERA

PARADOXOSO

BY JOHNS TUAZO

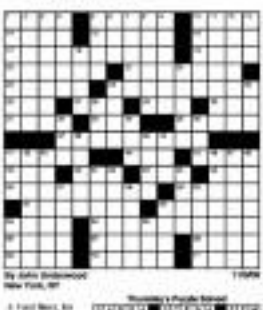
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By John Underwood
New York, NY

1 DOWN

ACROSS

1 Nobody has "Harry"
10 "Gimme Bolivar" response
14 Body-oil brand
15 Two Sullivan sisters
16 Horizontal barrier
17 Dilutes
19 Weight unit
20 Larger eighteen
21 Squealer
22 Boy's friend
24 Lumber cuts
26 Weekday letter
27 Unfamiliar language
29 Pressure in sports
30 Worse NTs
31 Kitchen apron
32 Bee's wife
33 Nobby
34 Mouth-ing- and mouth-ful ending
41 Discharge from the navy
42 Hatred weapon
43 Elliptical
44 Dog catcher's quarry
45 Bill's enemy
46 Wrong-headed
47 ___ Alamo
48 Concealment
50 Hotel-to-hospital
51 Gasp-aloud
52 Comes ahead
53 Schooling
54 Kind of insurance
55 Insurance loss
56 Ice or Eggplant
57 Expedition sum
60 Wet spot
62 Bakery number
63 Works hard
64 Four-sixths

DOWN

1 Romantic trio
2 Gambler
3 Long golf club
4 Picked pairs
5 Pass one at a time
6 Fast Benz, for short
7 Pull, Tug, verse
8 ___ Takes the Days
9 Car for Dan
10 Tippler's needs
11 Big name in entertainment
12 Mish-mash
13 Baking theater
18 Mr. Dugliss
23 Mediocre showing
25 Heatwave point
27 NBC beneficiary
28 Miniatures
29 Grieg's stone worker
30 Sci-fi craft
31 Cameron Kingdom
33 Bridal dress-up
35 Work area
36 Bridal dress-up, in part
37 Cell of CSI
38 Zoo large
39 Car customizer
40 Hall of CSI
41 Kennycott
46 Japanese
47 Debris
48 Homebody
51 Unwanted buggers
52 Zuricic
54 Up or overturn
58 Spain
59 Loaded with fat
61 Majestic
62 Go to Homer in
63 "Well Be T
hours
64 Sandhill's cited post bit
65 Hawaiian lanai
66 Alphabet fan
68 Hot

Wondering's Puzzle Reboot

HOROSCOPE

THIS WEEK YOURS: You have seven weeks ahead the heavens unwilling. There's no need to be nervous, unsympathetic or unfriendly. Just let what you want with dogged determination. You like to work on your own time schedule. (You won't be rushed.) You purposefully (secretly) or unbeknown to you (openly) like to do. Continue to work hard to build or use your networking like-ness.

Birthdate of: Ramon Mitra, comedian; Larry Holmes, boxer; Roseanne Barr, comedienne.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Someone might surprise you with an offer of help or support for what you're doing. Others would even give unsolicited bits of stuff or guidance. And say "thank you."

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Extraordinary gifts, talents or abilities that others thought are not usually found today. You might learn something about someone that you never knew before. (Paragraphs to Kristy.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be it romance and opportunity could come your way today. Alternatively, a packed task suggest that affects your job might arise. Something you've been waiting for.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Sassy fans, there might arise new solutions that you have been looking for. Click to bit? Your creative drive is strong. Vacation offers or invitations to see sports might also delight you.

LEO (July 23 to August 22): You have a wonderful way of explaining things to someone today. Your inner mother might come out to play. Or you might be pleased surprise. Succession by Philip Differently. Unexpected company might drop by.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your inner fan will definitely be interested today. An unexpected turn of events, new activities and new acquaintances will make this a surprising and eventful time for you. It's a stimulating day.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Something especially interesting or unusual might find means you might find means. Spooky, you're surprised will make. Make life seem to see many of exciting things.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You'll be so perceptive day. You feel independent and unconventional, allowing to be yourself. Some may or learn you'll You feel an need to apologize for what you say.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): If you have any time for organizing, you'll do. Other things could be needed to see today. In part, this might happen because you're in a heightened awareness of everything now. It's as if you have X-ray vision.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Someone unusual might take you by surprise. Or you might be the one who doesn't expect. Your sensitivity and artistic flair and an something unusual that others notice.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel in fantastic form today. You won't be afraid to voice your opinions, giving you an Jam about anything. You want to be with your friends. Give you and I.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a day when you're feeling very sensitive to your surroundings and your understanding of the world, especially through sources of the arts, science, technical disciplines, politics or economics. You want to explore unconventional.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★★★

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	4	8	5	2	1	3	7	6
2	3	7	9	6	4	5	1	8
6	1	5	7	8	3	9	4	2
7	8	3	6	1	9	2	5	4
1	2	4	3	5	8	7	6	1
5	9	6	2	4	7	8	3	9
4	7	9	1	3	6	6	2	5
3	5	1	8	9	2	4	3	7
8	6	2	4	7	5	1	9	3

Medium ★★★

Color me pretty

Blend and lift till shades fade into one shade.

I AM AN OBSERVER. In a party you can leave me sitting in one corner and find me in the same spot hours after. Trust me, I am happy as a clam just people-watching.

Thus, my love for fashion shows. It's basically the same thing, minus the pressure of having to go through small talk. Thanks to the Metrosense series of shows by Metro magazine, I get to watch some of our best designers' creations on the runway. I take my seats, watch the show, then leave as soon as it's over.

Aside from the clothes, make-up plays a big part in a fashion show. If bags have something to complimenting shoes, clothes do, too, and there's basically makeup. Of course, day makeup can be as simple as luce powder and lip balm. But evening events are not just a step up, but an entirely different playing field.

When it comes to blush and lippies, the rules are simple. If you know how to apply it, then any vibrant application is the same. Only the choice of shade changes. Playing up your eyes can truly involve blending eye shadows, but lining your eyes and curling your lashes, and mascara. Of course, well-groomed eyebrows are also a given.

Knockout!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

Blending is key. When using more than one hue, make sure you get to blend all of them well

Here are some guidelines to remember:

•**Know your shade.** When shopping for eye shadow, pick the shade that best complements your skin. No, it doesn't always have to be a neutral color. It would be unwise to pick a shade that matches the color of your eyes but certainly not the color of your nails.

•When in doubt, be safe. Even with eye shadow hues, it is better to be safe than sorry. Our goal is to look good, not look like a clown. If you've just started wearing makeup, then start with neutral shades. Then slowly try smokier colors.

•Take time to familiarize yourself with makeovers in counters or simply playing with samples so you don't get stuck with a shade you can't use. Trying open to different brands can even save you a ton of cash. Check LBB and Avon for their colors.

•Blending is key. When using more than one color, make sure you get to blend all of them well. If you can't tell where the colors start or end, then simply assume you've done a good job. If a line separates two or more colors, blend them some more.

•Make colors work for you. Remember that if you want to open up your eyes, stick to lighter shades. For darker shades, the smokier your eyes will seem.

•Leave to fate. Lining your eyes adds drama and definition to your look. If you're in a rush, a non-colored eyeliner would be the best recession.

The use of layered eye shadows is a bit daunting.

Tale of an orchid

Pasuyuan #1

No stranger to cult products, Caudalie's Grape Complexe, launched in 1999, is still available today, the same with their Source de la Beauté lip balm, which was formulated 176 years ago. Now, another cult product is born with this exceptionally formulated facial lotion.

The orchid is known for its dazzling and radiant qualities that appeal to those who appreciate the essence of true beauty in parts of Asia, the orchid is held sacred and is used as a symbol of virtue and grace, considered a sacred work of art designed by nature.

As a member of the flower kingdom, the orchid species stands on its own, possessing what Caudalie considers the secret of eternal beauty. It is Caudalie's belief in the wonders of nature at work in the orchid that has inspired its quest for youth. In the desire to preserve female beauty and freshness, it sought to uncover the secret of this mythical flower's long life and flowering period.

The Research Caudalie conducted questions like "how could the orchid's process of longevity be instituted?" could that be the secret to eternal youth?"

It has taken seven long years of arduous research to perfect the science behind the orchid's magical properties. Still fascinated by the performance of the orchid's molecular extract, Caudalie's research scientists continue their investigations to this day. As a matter of fact, their latest advances were already presented in two major conferences, last March at the International Anti-Aging Medicine Conference in Paris, and in May at Philadelphia Annual Meeting of the Society for Investigative Dermatology.

Of the 30,000 natural species of orchids, only few have been chosen by Caudalie's research scientists. Working in partnership with orchid experts through physio-chemical testing and work on cell cultures of human skin and DNA chips, they have taken a look at the orchid's extraordinary properties derived from the roots of these true flowers.

Advanced anti-aging technology in the isolated Orchid Molecular Extract was found to give cells the most outstanding functional longevity. To assist in this fact, the new Grape Solar Infusion plant has specific key effects in the battle against aging.

First, it preserves the existing cell membrane, which is believed to be the key in attaining youthful skin. Second, the extract boosts the capacity of cells to regenerate. Third, proteins responsible for the protection of DNA (known as thioredoxin reductase) are maximized and possessed through the extract. Fourth, tissue inflammation is controlled through the stimulation of the "longevity gene" called IL-10. Lastly, tissue damage caused by the attack of free radicals is addressed by combating the effects of what the researchers call cytotoxic transformers. To put it simply, the extract controls the internal deterioration of tissue at the cellular level.

In the end, the results speak for Caudalie's new product. To prove its effectiveness, a clinical test was carried out by dermatologists on 32 women who used the product daily for a month and reported a 30-percent reduction in wrinkles and fine lines.

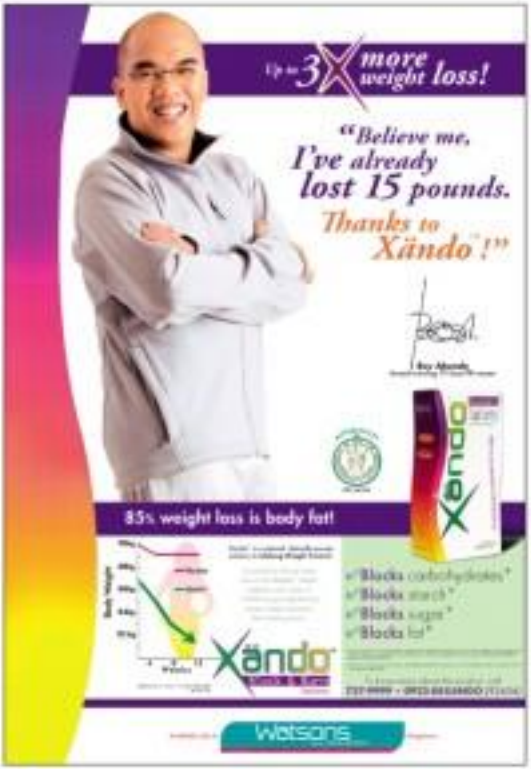
On the other hand, based on this self-evaluation of 60 women over a four-week period, 80 percent attested to more supple and restructured skin; while 80 percent observed firmer and more radiant skin.

To test its efficacy, I decided to break out of my four-year eye-care routine just to see if the product passed my skin care test. In the past, whenever I'd wear my true love, mascara, my usual cocktail of eye creams, the skin around my eyes area always turned dry and flaky.

Well, it has been three weeks and I haven't touched any of my old creams. I love the fact that I can just use one product for both the eye and face area, and that I can use the lotion both during the day and at bedtime.

It may carry a hefty price tag, but it's relatively affordable if you consider all the other products you don't need now, as well as the time saved and the luxury of having just one product to apply instead of the usual seven or eight. For those who value their time and money, the product is a godsend!

MODEL with orchid-inspired makeup.



Practical gift-giving with Robinsons Supermarket's Christmas baskets

Robinsons Supermarket is again a step ahead in providing its customers practical ideas for corporate gift-giving this coming holiday season. Because it is never too early to start shopping for Christmas, it presents a wide assortment of gift baskets that help you save energy and time-conusming trips to stores to look for good buys for your corporate clients and business partners.

Robinsons Supermarket offers a wide array of ready made food baskets. You are sure to find one that suits your gift-giving needs.

Available in festively-wrapped packages and different price ranges, you will find Yuletide baskets that are well within your budget. There are baskets that are available for as low as P300. Mid-priced gift baskets, on the other hand, are from P500 and up. Premium baskets are priced from P1,000 and up.

Relax and enjoy family festivities this holiday season with a wide selection of hams to choose from.

Staple holiday fare like fruitcakes and Food for the Gods are available in attractive Christmas packaging.

Robinsons Supermarket's Christmas baskets are the ideal presents because they can be delivered straight to your doorstep. For more details, call any Robinsons Supermarket branch or visit www.robinsons-supermarket.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Evangeline Lilly dreamt of Palawan, not Hawaii

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rydeen V. Arpiainen

LOS ANGELES—OUR RECENT TRIP TO Honolulu coincided with the Hawaii International Film Festival, which featured one party group. But the highlight was our interview with most of the cast of the hit TV series, "Lost," and chats to be made not on the beach and the studio where many indoor shots are filmed.

On the first part of our exclusive "Lost" encounter, we feature Evangeline Lilly who we reports straight that she lived in "a great but [illegible] likely a ninja [illegible] in the jungles in the Philippines." Ever smiling and cheerful, Evangeline, who wore a white long-sleeved lacy blouse (but not off her lovely face), talked to us about staying—but not living—in Palawan for three weeks.

The Canadian native, "Kate" in her cast mates, also discussed the love-knot triangle that her character finds herself involved in. Will she end up with Sawyer (Josh Holloway), with whom she had a passionate kiss if they're romantically tied not sybarite as it will really look like a child kiss between them), the cold-as Jack (Matthew Fox)?

In real life, the 27-year-old actress is going out with Dominic Monaghan, who stars likewise in "The Lord of the Rings" movie trilogy and is now playing Charlie on "Lost." Here on its third season, the award-winning "Lost" has exhibited fresh watchfulness. Blogs devoted to the series is constantly busy with the latest plot developments and predictions on the plane crash survivors who end up on an island that is not completely deserted. There's a group of mysterious island inhabitants known as "The Others."

Evangeline was poised in our interview with Rodolfo Dan Palm (the on the show), who's her self-serve about (as well as the rest of the cast) in the locality's column. After the casual robins, the cast joined us for cocktails and dinner on the oceanfront lawn of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel.

Next: Hilda Dalupan and Sheila Guhlemann Ong are ...

Past triumphs revisited and updated

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AFTER SYLVESTER STALLONE recently announced that he was revising his signature "Rocky" persona with a sixth movie depicting him in reflective maturity, it's Harrison Ford's turn to go the "one more for the road" route. Ford says he's teaming up with Georgie Lucas and Steven Spielberg to come up with "Indiana Jones 4."

Ford started in the first three Indiana Jones actioners in the 80s, when he was young, feisty and devil-may-care. ("Raiders of the Lost Ark" was shown in 1981, "Temple of Doom" in 1984, "The Last Crusade" in 1989.)

He's still a bankable star, but it has been 15 years since "The Last Crusade," and he is already 64-years-old, no something's got to give, right?

Well, not necessarily. Hollywood hermaphrey points to the semi-older likes of septuagenarian Clint Eastwood, who can still manage an occasional action-packed movie.

Why, compared to him, Ford is a frisky kid who can be expected to do incident to an action or chase scene, if required.

Tell that to the Marines! The Marines say, "Go for it!" As for filmmakers Lucas and Spielberg, they aren't so encouraging, and are expected to complete the new film's screenplay soonest.

They don't want Ford to grow any older before they shoot the film, that's for sure! (typifying self-direct.)

Now that both Indiana and Ford have announced their "mature sequels," who are the other senior stars who could also productively think of re-visiting and updating their past successes?

Should Diane Keaton and Woody Allen give their up-tempo screen relationship another go, 30 years after "Annie Hall?"

What about Elizabeth Taylor and Paul Newman ("Cat on a Hot Tin Roof")? ...Ho, that dished nostalgia hello.

Would Liza Minelli dare to play her mother, Judy Garland, in a film biz? Meryl Streep and Dustin Hoffman were a great dramatic team in "Kramer vs. Kramer" (1979). Drama buffs would definitely want to see them again in another thespic showcase.

What about Robert Redford and Barbra Streisand ("The Way We Were," 1973), any re-teaming up in the works? When will Jean Cooney favor us with another big-screen portrayal?

SHOW TIME

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

...r veteran stars who could ...have vital performances ...n them include Jane Fon... ...Clint Eastwood, Dane ...man, Sophia Loren, M... ...and Mary Spunck. Full ...n rest of the show by Oscar ...ald Hallmie and Hedlund ...d shewsche way.

...tin Short plays Jack

...ilton not comic Martin ...d was offered the role of ...Frost in "The Santa Clause ...The Escape Clause," he ...dn't revisit taking it on. ...y Frost was cast as the ri... ...in the movie and gave San... ...really tough time, but there ...e could tell it made the shoo... ...y this despite his winged m... ...ow.

...me enough, despite his do... ...en look down on Christ... ...and risks over the Yuletide ...ition to suit his many pos... ...le, Shorts front has chann...

...ort notes. "He's almost ...ble...in a strong showy ...of way," Producer Brian ...y adds, "Jack Frost is ...ful fun—you love to hate ...

...od Diamond'

...ter scoring tough in "The ...ld," Leonardo DiCaprio le... ...into the action hero mood ...his latest starrer, "Blood Dia... ...d." The actor arrested, for ...a bench African macro... ...who's on a dangerous ...for a rare pink diamond ...can transform his life.

...e film is set against the ...dcup of civil war and shows ...erra Leone in the 1990s. ...mercenary's quest becomes ...more charming when he ...ows that the prized stone ...been hidden by a fisherman ...mon (Hounsou).

...Blood Diamond" also stars ...elle Connelly as a journal... ...d Zwick drama.

...ance,
...rums,
...reams

...ER II AS ALSO FROM ...ue will the grand opening be ...r 8th Cinemaville Interna... ...d Film Festival.

...day the Mall of Asia Centre ...arena into a hub of dance, ...ic and drama as Cinemaville ...s with three features—Jesse ...n Clark's "Perhaps Love," Chi... ...ew musical in 3D years; Stan ...n's "Infernal Affairs Lau Mau Fa 6B ...Sin Pefia," accompanied by ...usic from the Radio Active Sa... ...ique; and the Asian premiere of ...Silence of Dogs."

...POSES YOUR BALMES

...lling priests

...e country's classiques is half- ...dancing show off their solo ...ts at the "Ballroomchaperone," a ...of shows that aims to raise ...r his old and ailing priests.

...ese priests may not get to ...the show," says producer Dr. ...Malones of Mount Roads, "but ...will have the satisfaction of ...ing that our performers will be ...ing to themselves."

...Ballroom Superstars" opens at ...ntic Margarita Hotel in Lucc... ...ty tomorrow, then moves on to ...ngasan Provincial Cultural Cen... ...Rio Gran, Laguna, Nov. 11, ...Wave Fiber, Batangas City, Nov. ...Cattle Fiddler, Tagaytay City, ...ber 7. Call (0917) 511-1205, ...) 304-5122, (0927) 479-7750 ...(02) 746-0964.

...Santos at forum on the ...e, Zoroaster's ...songs and Lessons at Stanley ...

...terview

...ndy Santos at Forum on the ...e, Zoroaster's ...ngs and Lessons at Stanley ...

...Flores is crowned queen on ...Tinsel at Antipolo" at Tanghal ...Rizalenses Television (TEP (with ...ers).

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2 BOA	7 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 CAKE	8 THE GUARDIAN
4 KALELDO	9 OPEN SEASON
5 THE MARINE	10 TILL I MET YOU

ERMITA

1 THE MARINE	
2 THE PRESTIGE	5 THE GRUDGE 2
3 BOA	6 WORLD TRADE CENTER
4 CAKE	7 KALELDO

METRO EAST

1 THE MARINE	5 THE GRUDGE 2
2 BOA	6 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 CAKE	7 THE PRESTIGE
4 KALELDO	8 OPEN SEASON

NOVALICHES

1 THE MARINE	3 THE GRUDGE 2
2 KALELDO	4 THE PRESTIGE

CITISQUARE MALABON | PIONEER

1 DEAD OR ALIVE	1 THE MARINE
2 TILL I MET YOU	2 BOA
3 RESERVE	3 OPEN SEASON
4 RESERVE	4 THE GRUDGE 2

STA. ROSA | LIPA

1 THE BANQUET	1 OPEN SEASON
2 BARNYARD	2 PULSE
3 THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE	3 FLY BOYS
4 TILL I MET YOU	4 AMERICAN SOLDIERS

DASMARINAS | ANGELES

1 THE BREED	1 MY FIRST WEDDING
2 THE PRESTIGE	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 BARNYARD	3 BARNYARD
4 FLY BOYS	4 THE GRUDGE 2

IMUS | STARMILLS

1 THE MARINE	1 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
2 THE GRUDGE 2	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 KALELDO	3 BARNYARD
4 DEAD OR ALIVE	4 THE BANQUET
	5 THE GRUDGE 2
	6 TILL I MET YOU

BACOLOD | ILOILO

1 THE GUARDIAN	1 THE GUARDIAN
2 DEAD OR ALIVE	2 WORLD TRADE CENTER
3 PULSE	3 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
4 TALLADEGA NIGHTS	4 THE BANQUET
5 POSSESSED BY EVIL	
6 OPEN SEASON	

Evangeline Lilly . . .

From page F1

maybe mature. "How time flies! It seems like a genie lost in the jungles of the Philippines with a missionary group. "How crazy!

I didn't grow up there. I grew up in Canada. I wasn't in a genie but in the jungle for three weeks in the Philippines.

How old were you then?

I was 16. It was an incredible experience I will never forget. I have a heart for the people there. For many years, I was involved with a ministry there but I grew up in Canada. I went from Canada to the Philippines—the island of Mindoro. I didn't really get to see much of Manila or the other islands. But where I did go was probably the best place for me to go to the Philippines. I just love the beauty of the rainforest. I love the simplicity of the indigenous people's lifestyles. It was difficult for me to leave. I actually almost took a permanent position there. When I came back to Canada, they offered me a permanent post in Mindoro for two years. I almost took it but at 16, I wasn't allowed to by parents.

What would you have done during that four-year post?

I was going to be posted as a teacher and he would work with a gentleman trying to put the local Bible's down in writing, help teach the children read and write and help a little bit in medicine. There were people there who were in need of ointment to couple as asthma. We have access to medical supplies that could be shot in a head here. Sometimes all they need is an inhaler. We would also provide some medical training and supplies, food and clothes.

Did your three-week stint there prepare you for filming "Lost" in Hawaii?

People have asked me that question a lot. They are wildly different experiences. Although what the audience sees of my experience on "Lost" is being in the jungle, beach and valley scenes, primarily my experience with the show for the last two and a half years has been in a very safe, pampered to a world of luxury (pause, pressure and stress. The Philippines, on the other hand, was one of the least crowded places I've been to. The lifestyle in Palawan was so simple and the pressures were just about getting survival. That rocks. On the other hand, the pressures to do indoor, try not to unique and complex. I feel that have demanded of me such different skills than what I had to in the Philippines. In Palawan, I had to give in and retrain over natural resources. In Hollywood, I feel like I'm constantly having myself into a very unnatural place and doing things that feel very foreign to me as a human being. But I have to do these things.

Such as?

Laughing! Like taking down yourself for hours on end in a room full of people. I mean, how weird is that? Before this was happened, who wants to hear about me for the next two hours of my life?

Perks.

But you wouldn't have (been interested) a few years ago as chef's a really cool thing. Now would, instead of becoming a world that's run by food, gets very creative because everything is about you. Everything revolves around you. I'm always fighting to push that out, to push out. Does really. It's amazing.

You have such a stable outlook. Can you tell us about your background, your parents?

I have really good parents. I was raised in a family that didn't have a lot of money but we didn't mind. That was okay. My parents always taught us that love is more valuable and that family is more important than any amount of material possessions. They taught us that money can't buy you that. And it can't. It's humbling. My parents gave me and my two sisters a real sense of self-worth. They always said, you are the most incredible, talented, beautiful, wonderful girl and you can do anything you want. I really think they believed that and so I believed it. So that's where those thoughts that she don't the limit. There is no limit for me. I can do whatever I want.

And the role in "Lost" just came your way, how different would your life be?

Very different. Before I started in "Lost," I was studying Intensive Hebrew in a university because I wanted to be a full-time missionary.

So what's plan?

In the Philippines, you know! As that time, it was with a Protestant group, yes. But to me, it was more important that I was doing humanitarian aid work than specifically religious work. I just knew a heart for people who are suffering. I don't believe that anyone who is blessed with the luxury that we have in North America can ignore the fact that there are people suffering and dying around the world.

Do you enjoy travelling?

I am still involved in a lot of things. When I started this job, I didn't stop anything. I just continued on the way. I was because I was nothing better than. I was a madman on an outrun Hawaii.

So Los Angeles?

In Vancouver. I never lived in Los Angeles.

Where do you live now?

I live here in Hawaii. We work here some months out of the year.

And what do you do during the other three months?

I travel. I pack a bag and I'm gone for three months, wherever I go. I don't have anywhere to rent. So, I traveled to Canada to visit my family. I traveled to England, Scotland, France, Italy and Spain.

You traveled with whom?

With my friend Daughter).

Is your friend an actor?

No. I travelled there with Dennis Quaid.

He's English. Did he take you to his hometown, Menai Bridge, England?

I don't quite remember (laughter). I'm having a memory lapse so that trip was all kind of a blur.

Well, that's not good. On actual fact, it means it was a good trip.

That's right. Maybe it was Anastasia Daughter) that we went to and I've just made up all these other (destinations). Bye.

What kind of life do you have in Hawaii?

A good one. I have taken up surfing. I am hoping to snorkel-ing. I'm hoping to snorkel-ing. I'm hoping to snorkel-ing. I'm

LIVING Stars

After Bonnie G. Roberts

MONIQUE WILSON

TAIL TALES

Our family has two Yorkshire Terriers. Sydney is 9 and Zoey is 7 years old. They have a paper who groomer, there, two before everyone, we send them to the vet to get their hair cut. They always a twinkle and free and safe treatment. They give us a lot of joy. They're like babies...cute and lovable. They're small, but they're also very good guard dogs. Sydney has things in

BOOKS

BIMBO CERRUDO

The last time I go thought now I'm no reader reading. "Conversations With God: An Uncommon Dialogue Books 1, 2 and 3" by Neale Donald Walsch. The series offers a contemporary approach to ancient wisdom since the tragic ruins of organized religion, it has taught me to live life without judgment and regret. It allows me to look at God in a different light, not as an old, white man, but as a loving and caring force in our lives.

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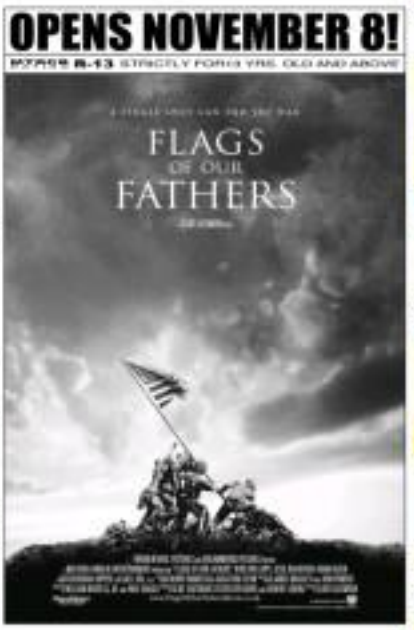

CHEERING SQUAD. Jaclyn Jose, Andrea Ramos, Sassy Poizon and Roderick Paulate attended the screening in support of the "Kalalo" cast.

DANTE MICKELA

"BALELOO" cast member Cristella Velita with son Rafa.

CHERRY PIE PICACHE with colleagues Roderick Paulate and Gina Alajar

FAINT SERRANO and Mark Gil

They did their best; now they celebrate

DIRECTOR BARLANTE "JAMES" Mendoza was resting at home when Living Stars rang him up the day before the nationwide screening of "Kalalo," for his ex-movie offering.

"I'm watching (MOL)," Mendoza said. "I try not to think about what might happen tomorrow. Whatever the turnout, I know we did our best to promote the film."

"Kalalo" (Pampango for "Treasure Hunt"), laid a special advance screening at Greenhills Cinema 7 in Mahkati City on Oct. 30. The event was attended by Movie and Television Review and Classification Board chief Shamina Lagsondila, representatives from friends organizations Gabriela and the Women's Media Circle, as well as celebrities who supported the "Kalalo" cast led by Cherry Pie Picache.

Picache has been getting good reviews for her portrayal of Ana, the shrewly suffering and oppressed lesbian daughter of a domineering father played by Johnny Delgado. "Kalalo" was inspired by true incidents in Mendoza's family.

The 8 p.m. screening was preceded by a short welcome speech by Brillante and "Kalalo" assistant director Arman Reyes.

The film had its world premiere at the 2006 Rome Film Festival in early October; it was also screened at international film fests in Vienna, Austria, Cairo, Egypt and Hawaii.

Marivel B. Cruz

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GB1 1 THE PRESTIGE | 2 THE MARINE
GB3 1 THE PRESTIGE | 2 THE MARINE | 3 THE GRUDGE 2 | 4 MARIE ANTOINETTE | 5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
ATC 1 THE MARINE | 2 CHAOS | 3 THE PRESTIGE | 4 WORLD TRADE CENTER | 5 THE GRUDGE 2
ACC 1 THE ANNUITY | 2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION | 3 BARNYARD | 4 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
M2 1 THE MARINE | 2 IBIA | 3 KALALOO | 4 THE GRUDGE 2 | 5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

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FRAMED pictures of her family occupy a special place in the living room. The bead bracelet she's wearing was made by her son.

AVENTINE room in the attic was converted into a dressing room, where racks and racks of dresses and costumes are stored.

FRAMED photographs in the hallway are gifts from her mom and her former partner Gary Yu.

Definitely domesticated

AFTER a hard day's work, she actress unwinds by having a cup of coffee in the pocket garden.

Cherry Pie Picache, away from the limelight

By Ibarani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Roger Cargo

I ENJOY DOING HOUSEHOLD chores," Cherry Pie Picache exclaims. "I bathe my son, feed him. I go to the grocery. I cook."

The award-winning actress used to own a restaurant called Liquid and is a whiz at the kitchen. Her friends count her sure-fire, kalderetas, lasagna, refreshing merienda and lechon among their favorites.

She's planning to put up a new one, which she will call Pie's Corner. "The menu will include all the recipes I've learned from relatives, or will up-close. I've picked up from friends."

HOME BODY

Hands-on homemaker, she is.

In fact, she supervised the building of the house in 1999.

"My contractor abandoned me in the last phase of construction," she recounts. "I had to do everything... including buy nails, paint and drapes. I stopped working for a month."

As a result, she is now attached to the place, which she originally planned to sell.

"Labor of love ikasi," she explains. "Sometimes we were interested, but I couldn't part with it."

From the current Mediterranean look, she's planning to turn the house into a modern Asian abode. "I'm into white and wood now."

A dramatic dancer's work is never done.

Aaron's portrait at upper left corner is by Ronnie Chavez, an uncle of Gary's (the boy's dad). Also in photo is Cherry Pie's niece Bajoca.

HER trophies are displayed in the audio-video room. "But my sanctuary is my most precious award."

SHE started collecting furniture and art pieces, "when I was still single."

ANTON'S baby photos are prominently displayed in the living room.

THE KIDDIE room is where she bonds on most days with her son. "I make him laugh every day." Recently, he made her cry when he gifted her with the bead bracelet, a school project.

"MY FRIENDS love my kare-kare, kaldereta, lasagna, refreshing merienda and lechon," says the kitchen whiz.

THE CHINA cabinet serves as counterpoint to the modern geometric dining chairs. Pie personally chose all the drapes.